SPECIAL 2026 IMAGING AWARDS ISSUE

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Polaroid's 'Thrasher' Limited Edition – Each Camera Is Unique

ON TRIAL

WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT RICOH'S GR COMPACTS?

Read Our GR IV Test To Find Out

COMPETITION

POWER AND GLORY

Weather Photo Comp's Striking Images

FUTURE
ISSUE 434
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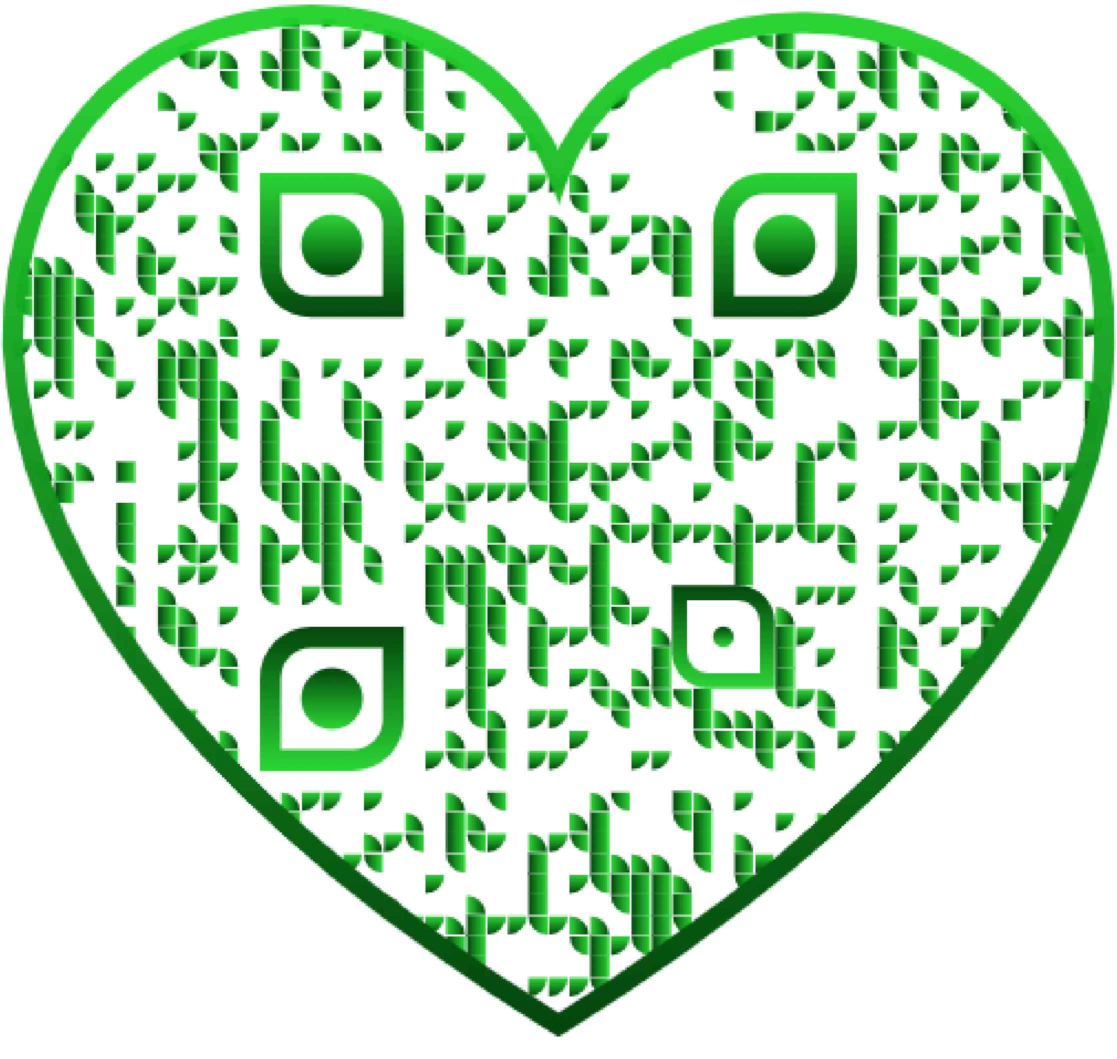

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ISSUE 434

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Printed by IVE GROUP

Distributed in Australia by
Are Direct Pty Limited **www.aredirect.com.au**

ISSN 1449-0137

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Camera magazine is a member of the
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INFOCUS

HIDDEN TREASURES... OR LOST TREASURES?

Primary school boys on the island of Capri, Italy, May 1961. Photo by Fred Matthews.

There have been plenty of stories over recent times of interesting collections of photographs being discovered in junk shops or in attics during clean-outs. And I'm not so much talking here of pictures that have since been found to be historically significant in one way or another, but the photographs that were taken to record family gatherings, parties, travels and the other happenings of everyday life. Invariably prints – but sometimes transparencies if somebody's relative or friend was a keen amateur photographer – over time they'd be consigned to the back of cupboards or packed in boxes to be forgotten until a clear-out happened. This clear-out is often prompted by the passing of the last holder of the family archives and, unless a younger family member was interested, the next stop could well be the tip. Sad, but a reality.

Perhaps, however, if there was an old camera or two involved perhaps the whole lot would end up at an op shop or a garage sale or maybe even an antique shop. It was boxes and boxes of exposed but unprocessed films that lead to the discovery of the remarkable archive of Vivian Maier – unknown during her lifetime, but now considered one of the more important photographers of the 20th century. And an old box of 35mm Kodachrome slides purchased in 2017 – and still exhibiting the transparency film's legendary colour despite being over 60 years old – started a growing archive of discovered photography called The Anonymous Project (visit https://www.anonymous-project.com). Film-maker Lee Shulman has become committed to finding collections of old colour slides and preserving them before they "fade out of existence altogether". Notably, these are all amateur photographs which with the addition of time have taken on a different interest as documents of lifestyles, fashions, architecture, cars, shopfronts and more from the past. Shulman also likes amateur photographs for their "unpolished quality" and there's certainly an appealing honesty and naturalness to photographs that were taken as a record rather than as a work of art.

A partially exposed roll of film in an old camera can still represent the start of an adventure in history… albeit often a very small history, but potentially fascinating nonetheless. And there are no doubt still treasures waiting to be unearthed and which will each tell intimate stories about times, people and places.

Surviving into her early 90s, my late mother-in-law had become the repository of many collections of photographs from relatives which subsequently became the what-to-do-with nightmare outlined above. However, among them was a huge collection of slides documenting a world trip taken by an uncle in 1961 when such travel was still very much a luxury. There were plenty of focus and exposure misses among these pictures – Kodachrome was particularly unforgiving – but some are brilliant records of what life looked like in Paris, London, Rome, Copenhagen and elsewhere – at the start of the 1960s. I'm in the process of cleaning them up as much as is possible and there's definitely a photobook in it at the end. It's worth remembering that whoever took these pictures likely never saw them as prints as slides were projected, but fortunately they were accompanied by a pretty detailed diary which is helping in identifying the less well-known locations.

All this got me thinking about how such images might be discovered – or not – in the future. More pictures are taken daily on smartphone than was ever the case with snapshot cameras, but these fleeting moments are fleeting in themselves… perhaps viewed once or twice, forgotten and then likely lost. Photographers are – or should be – more careful about archiving their images from a smartphone, but a great many people simply move on from device to device, and so decades of social history are, more or less, disappearing into the ether. Of course, physical prints and slides are at risk of disappearing too, but while they still exist, they are potentially discoverable. And, unlike with digital files, that potential likely increases over time. The message is simple… make time to make prints, even just postcard-sized. They're more involving to look at anyway than a small screen on a smartphone. Photobooks are brilliant too, especially if you add descriptive captions. It's not hard do – the software gets better with every new generation – and it's well worth the effort. Family and friends can enjoy them now… and unknown people in the future will thank-you. I find that motivation enough..

Paul Burrows

Paul Burrows, Editor.

CONTENTS

AUSTRALIAN CAMERA MAGAZINE – ISSUE 434

REGULARS

6 WHAT'S NEW

There's been plenty happening over the last couple of months and, of course, we're now into the run up to Christmas. Both Canon and Nikon have launched into the compact cinema camera sector with the EOS C50 and the ZR respectively which will take on Sony's very popular FX3 and the newer FX2. Nikon's classically-styled Zf full frame mirrorless camera has been a big hit and now it's available with a silver finish and some new insert colours. There have been interesting new lenses galore, including the 100mm f/2.8 Macro G Master model from Sony and the Lumix S 100-500mm f/5.0-7.1 OIS telezoom from Panasonic. Sigma continues its busy year with the remarkable 135mm f/1.4 DG Art and the 20-200mm f/3.5-6.3 DG Contemporary. And from OM System comes the M.Zuiko Digital ED 50-200mm f/2.8 IS PRO which is effectively a 100-400mm and the first time that this focal range has been combined with a constant aperture of f/2.8. And beyond the hardware, the 2026 running of world's biggest photo competition celebrating all aspects of

◄ **Page 64:** 2025 Sony Alpha Awards
Image by Joanne Stephan © 2025

► **Page 56:** Polaroid Now Generation 3 'Thrasher' Edition

food and wine is now open for entries. In Brisbane, Ricoh has opened its fourth GR Space which will serve as a hub for the enthusiastic community of Australian GR series camera users.

14 LIGHT WORK

These pictorial features are designed to help you better appreciate how successful photographers deal with different subjects and situations to create a memorable photograph. In this issue, it's the story behind the charming photograph which won this year's Rural Aid *Spirit of the Bush* competition.

78 SIGMA SHOWCASE 2025

Our Showcase sponsor, Sigma lenses – via Australian distributor C.R. Kennedy Photo Imaging – is providing the competition's grand prize of a lens – your choice of model and mount – valued at up to $1000. The 2025 Showcase is now up to Round 4, but there's still another couple of rounds to go so now is the time to get some entries in. Submit your entries online at camera@futurenet.com

80 CAMERA BUYER'S CHECKLISTS – MIRRORLESS CAMERAS, DIGITAL RF CAMERAS AND DSLRS

Christmas is coming so why treat yourself to a new camera? Our buyer's checklists for mirrorless cameras, DSLRs and the digital RF models allow you to directly compare all the key specifications and features at the main price points.

FEATURES

20 SPECIAL FEATURE 2026 CAMERA MAGAZINE IMAGING AWARDS

We've been sorting through all the great new imaging products released on the Australian market over the last 12 months to decide the winners in our annual awards which recognise innovation and design excellence. It's been a big year so there was plenty of discussion, debating and deliberations before we arrived at our conclusions. Turn to page to read all about the products we consider to be the best of the best.

38 COMPETITION WEATHER PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2025

It's all around us every day, providing endless opportunities for dramatic photographs if you're in the right place at the right time. The tenth year Weather Photographer of The Year competition showcases the awe-inspiring beauty and the fear-inducing power of weather in all its forms from tranquil to stormy.

62 CAMERA ICONS OLYMPUS OM-1

These are the cameras that changed photography in one way or another, and back in 1972, the OM-1 stunned everybody with its small size and light weight. It not only made the Olympus name, but influenced 35mm SLR design for decades to come.

64 COMPETITION 2025 SONY ALPHA AWARDS

Specifically open to photographers resident in Australia and New Zealand, the annual Sony Alpha Awards celebrates its tenth year of competition in 2025. Over 3000 entries in 13 categories showed off the talents of a growing legion of local Sony Alpha system users.

ON TRIAL

30 ON TRIAL – RICOH GR IV

Now a thriving community rather than just a camera, Ricoh's GR series compact cameras have been big hits since the mid-1990s so what makes them so special? The latest GR IV model sticks with the basic formula, but with plenty of tweaks to make for an even more appealing package.

50 ON TRIAL – OM SYSTEM M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 50-200mm f/2.8 IS PRO

The OM System 50-200mm packs a lot of a capabilities into a comparatively compact telezoom. The effective focal length of 100-400mm is combined with a fast constant aperture of f/2.8, excellent close-up focusing, a handy 5.5 stops of image stabilisation and full protection against the elements. Another compelling argument for the Micro Four Thirds OM System.

56 ON TRIAL – POLAROID NOW GENERATION 3 'THRASHER' EDITION

Check this out. A special dipping process for applying the graphics to the body shells means every camera in Polaroid's 'Thrasher' edition is different to the next. Under the in-your-face exterior is the Now Generation 3 camera, the modern interpretation of the once hugely popular OneStep series.

74 CLASSICS ON TRIAL – FUJI GS645S PROFESSIONAL

Long before the digital GFX100RF, there was a long line of Fujifilm medium format fixed-lens film cameras, including many 6x4.5cm models which delivered a big-picture performance from very compact and lightweight cameras. They're affordable classics too.

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2026 CAMERA MAGAZINE IMAGING AWARDS WINNERS
GNARLY!

OUR FRONT COVER:
Featured on this issue's front cover are a selection of the winning products in our 2026 Camera Magazine Imaging Awards. You see them all – and find out why they won – by turning to page 20. The pictorial image is by Spanish photographer Carlos Castillejo Balsera and is a finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025 competition. There's more starting on page 38.

GR SPACE
BRISBANE

FIRST RICOH GR SPACE IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE OPENS

THE AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTOR of Ricoh products, C.R. Kennedy & Company Pty. Ltd., has opened the first GR Space in the Southern Hemisphere, located right in the heart of Brisbane.

Following the GR Space galleries Shanghai, Tokyo and Beijing, this new creative hub is designed to celebrate the culture, community, and artistry surrounding the legendary Ricoh GR compact cameras. It will serve as a meeting place for photographers, artists, and enthusiasts to connect, learn, and showcase their work. The opening ceremony was attended by Kazunobu Saiki who is the general manager of Ricoh Imaging's Camera Business Division and is known as the "godfather of GR", having been involved with the line since 1996. As an indication of the importance of the new showcase space, Ricoh Imaging's President, Yasutomo Mori, was on hand to conduct the formal cutting of the ribbon and the ceremonial breaking of the sake barrel (a Japanese tradition which celebrates new beginnings and also brings good fortune).

The opening of GR Space Brisbane is timed to coincide with the launch of the GR IV, the latest model in the long GR line. To mark this occasion, an inaugural exhibition, titled simply *IV*, features the work of

Four long-time GR users, each showing their first creations made with the GR IV. The four are Hamish Ta-mé, Jason Lau, Zakari Kha and Canadian Chris Niccolls who is also well-known for hosting the PetaPixel podcast and his reports on the PetaPixel website.

In addition to the photographic exhibitions, GR Space Brisbane is also showcasing a curated collection of photobooks, carefully selected by Booktopia. The exhibited works re produced as fine-art prints on Ilford Galerie Fine Art Papers,

"The GR series has always been more than just a camera – it's a movement, a culture and a way of seeing the world," commented

C.R. Kennedy & Co. director, Clem Kennedy, "With GR Space Brisbane, we are creating a place to promote Australian home-grown talent, and we are honoured to have opened our doors at the same time as the global launch of the Ricoh GR IV."

GR Space Brisbane will host regular exhibitions, workshops and events designed to showcase Australian photography while also connecting local creatives to the global GR culture. GR Space Brisbane is located at Level 2, 203 Wharf Street, Spring Hill, Brisbane 4000. For more information visit **https://wharf203.com.au/gr-space-brisbane**, and on Instagram @RicohGRAustralia

◂The president of Ricoh Imaging Company Ltd, Yasutomo Mori, prepares for the ceremonial breaking of the sake barrel at the opening of GR Space Brisbane.

TASCAM
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NIKKOR
Z 24-70mm 1:4 S

NIKON ZR IS THE FIRST FRUIT OF RED ACQUISITION

COMPACT CINEMA CAMERAS are another current trend and, not long after the Sony FX2 and Canon's EOS C50, Nikon announced the ZR which is a Z mount model primarily designed for video work. The 'R' obviously stands for RED – the cinema camera-maker that Nikon now owns – and the ZR also carried RED branding. Nikon describes the ZR as its "first Z cinema camera" and it features an all-new body built around the same 'partially stacked' 24.5 megapixels CMOS sensor that's used in the Z6III and which enables a faster read-out speed. There isn't an EVF, but the ZR has a large 10.1 cm monitor screen with a peak brightness of 1000 nits and in the video-orientated 16:10 aspect ratio. Significantly too, it supports the wider P3 colour gamut.

Also significant is a new 12-bit RAW video codec called R3D NE which has the same colour science as RED's RECODE RAW (although it's not the same coding), making it easier to integrate footage with that from the higher-end RED cameras. However, until it's supported by existing video editors, R3D NE clips will need to be processed using a software called Red Cine X Pro. As with REDCODE RAW, footage is locked to one of two base ISO settings – 800 and 6400 – and any subsequent adjustments are tagged in the metadata, but there's no change to the gain. Instead, the camera adjusts the exposure accordingly – similar to Sony's 'Cine EI' approach – which gives more flexibility over adjusting brightness in post. RAW video can also be shot in Nikon's N-RAW and the Apple ProRes RAW HQ codec, but shooters who don't need the data-intensive RAW formats, the ZR has a new Cinematic video mode which automatically adjusts the shutter angle to 180 degrees, changes the frame rate to 24 fps, and applies the RED 'Cine Bias Picture Control' for dynamic cinematic colour. Additionally, nine RED-curated cinematic Picture Controls based on the RED creative LUTs (look-up tables) are available as free download from the Nikon Imaging Cloud.

The ZR records RAW video at up to 6K and 50/60 fps, 4K DCI at up to 50/60 fps and 4K UHD at up to 100/120 fps, but with a 1.52x crop (i.e. Cinema 35). The compressed codes are ProRes 422, H.265 (with either 10-bit or 8-bit 4:2:0) or H.264. With some variations depending on the selected codec, the options here are 5.4K res at up to 50/60 fps, 4K UHD at 50/60 fps (either at the full sensor width or with the 1.52x crop), 4K UHS at 100/120 fps cropped and Full HD at up to 50/60/100/120 fps (again either full width or with the 1.52x crop), and Full HD at 200/240 fps with a 1.03 crop.

On the audio size, the ZR is notable for being the first mirrorless camera to have 32-bit 'float' recording internally rather requiring an external XLR adapter (such as the Panasonic Lumix S1R II). This is designed to eliminate clipped and distorted audio which often happens when there are sudden increases (or reductions) in the sound levels. It also eliminates the need to continually manually adjust the recording levels.

Notably too, the ZR introduces a multi-functional hotshoe – which Nikon is calling a "digital accessory shoe" – which can power supporting accessories such as a microphone. Nikon says a compatible compact mic is on the way. As it happens, the ZR has a trio of built-in mics which use Nokia's OZO Audio directional technology and have a choice of five pick-up patterns to match the sensitivity with the subject or situation.

The Nikon ZR is priced at $3499 body only and $4449 packaged with the Nikkor Z 24-70mm f/4.0 S zoom lens. Nikon Australia provides a two-year warranty for Nikon cameras and lenses purchased from an authorised reseller. For more information visit **www.nikon.com.au**

NIKKOR
24-120/4 S
85 70 50 35 28 24
L-Fn
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DISP
MODE
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Z R
Z CINEMA

20-200mm 1:3.5-6.3 DG ⌀72 SIGMA
20 28 35 50 85 135

SIGMA CONTINUES 2025 LENS DELUGE

SIGMA CONTINUES A highly productive year with the introduction of two significant new lens models. The Sigma 135mm f/1.4 DG Art is the world's first autofocus lens to combine the 135mm focal length with the very fast maximum aperture of f/1.4 while the 20-200mm f/3.5-6.3 DG Contemporary is the world's first 10x zooming range model which commences at the 20mm focal length. Both are good examples of the increased design freedoms that are now available with the mirrorless camera configuration.

Not surprisingly, the 135mm f/1.4 DG Art is a beefy lens with a diameter of close to 112 millimetres – thanks to an extra-large diameter front element – and a weight of 1420 grams. The optical construction comprises 17 elements in 13 groups with six of these elements being special types – four using Sigma's 'FLD' glass and two aspherically-shaped. The 'FLD' elements – it stands for 'F Low Dispersion' – are designed to have the same super extra-low dispersion characteristics of fluorite glass but without being as expensive to produce. 'FLD' elements are especially effective at minimising chromatic aberrations.

The lens employs a 'floating' autofocusing system – using two focusing groups which move independently – to optimise image sharpness across the focusing range. Dual 'HLA' (High-Response Linear Actuator) drives provide both high thrust and high speed for fast and precise AF operation. The minimum focusing distance is 110 centimetres, and the very shallow depth-of-field at f/1.4 makes Sigma's super-fast 135mm well suited to applications such as portraiture. Additionally, a 13-blade diaphragm ensures very smooth, uniformly circular out-of-focus effects.

The external construction is fully weather sealed and the front element has a fluorine coating to help repel moisture and grease and also enable easier cleaning. The 135mm f/1.4 DG is available in the FE and L mounts.

The 20-200mm f/3.5-6.3 DG Contemporary is currently available in the FE mount only and packs a lot into a comparatively compact lens that weigh just 540 grams. It's only 117.5 millimetres in length, but as the zooming mechanism is telescopic, it extends quite a bit at 200mm. The optical construction employs 18 elements in 14 groups with a total of eight special types – one 'FLD', three 'SLD' (that's 'Super-Low Dispersion') and four. Aspherical types. Again, the autofocusing uses Sigma's 'HLA' drive and the minimum focusing distance is 16.5 centimetres at 28mm to give a maximum magnification ratio of 1:2 (i.e. half life size). In fact, this magnification is maintained from the 28mm to 85mm focal lengths so the 20-200mm can add handy close focusing capabilities to its other talents. It's also weather-sealed and has a fluorine anti-smudge coating on the front element. Other features include a zoom lock and a nine-blade diaphragm.

The Sigma 135mm f/1.4 DG Art is priced at $3999 and the 20-200mm f/3.5-6.3 DG Contemporary at $1799. Sigma products are distributed in Australia by C. R. Kennedy Photo Imaging and for more information visit **https://sigmaphoto.com.au**

Canon
85
CANON LENS RF85mm F1.4 L VCM

CANON ADD FAST 85MM PRIME TO HYBRID LENS LINE

JOINING THE EXISTING 20mm, 24mm, 35mm, 50mm models, the RF 85mm f/1.4L is another of Canon's hybrid stills/video fast primes, and all share the same dimensions to make it easy to switch them in and out in a video rig. It means they also all have the same balance when the camera is on a gimbal. And they all have the same screwthread filter fitting of 67 millimetres.

A notable feature of these lenses is the use of a voice coil motor (VCM) as part of its autofocusing drive and which has more thrust to be able to move the heavy focusing group which is one part of a 'floating' focusing arrangement. The finer adjustments – using a lighter focusing element – are then performed by a 'Nano USN' ultrasonic pulsed drive. They also have a manual aperture collar although only for video shooting and so it only has seamless adjustment with no click-stopped settings.

The Canon RF 85mm f/1.4L VCM has an optical construction which employs 14 elements in 10 groups, including one with ultra-low dispersion (UD) characteristics and one aspherical type created using glass moulding (GMo). Collectively, these special elements optically correct for distortion and chromatic aberrations. The floating focus arrangement also minimises focus 'breathing' when shooting video, but the lens also supports Canon's in-camera digital correction for any variations in image size when focusing (available on the later, higher-end EOS R bodies). An 11-blade diaphragm gives smoother out-of-focus effects which obviously advantageous when shooting subjects such as portraits. The minimum subject distance is 75 centimetres and the minimum aperture is f/16.

The RF 85mm uses both Canon's 'ASC' (Air Sphere Coating) and 'Super Spectra' anti-reflection multi-coatings to minimise flare and ghosting.

The barrel construction is sealed against dust and moisture, and a fluorine coating is applied to the front element to help better repel water and grease.

The Canon RF 85mm f/1.4L VCM lens is available now, priced at $2699. Canon Australia provides a five-year warranty for cameras and lenses purchased from an authorised reseller. For more information visit **www.canon.com.au.**

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Delfina, A Pasta Granny by Lizzie Mayson (United Kingdom), winner of the Clare Aho Award For Women Photographers, World Food Photography Awards 2025 sponsored by Brocollini®.

START COOKING UP YOUR FOOD PHOTO COMP ENTRIES NOW

NOW IN ITS 15th year, the 2026 edition of the World Food Photography Awards sponsored by Broccolini® is open for entries. The competition invites both amateur and professional photographers to share their pictures of food stories from all around the world, whether told through landscape, portrait, travel, wedding, photojournalistic or any other style of photography.

There's a top prize of £5000 (around A$10,000 at current exchange rates) to be won and all finalist images will be exhibited at the prestigious Mall Galleries in London. A hand-picked selection of finalist images will also be displayed at the iconic Fortnum & Mason store in London's Piccadilly. Of course, there'll be plenty of other publicity around the world, including in this magazine.

With over 25 categories, the Awards recognise that food touches lives in a diversity of ways – from growing, harvesting and cooking: to eating, celebrating and surviving. For the 2026 competition, there's a new category called Food As Home which – open to entrants with lived experience of displacement due to conflict or persecution – to submit images which show the way in which food can evoke home.

The Awards also welcome the renowned Burgundian wine house Louis Jadot for the Louis Jadot Wine Photographer of the Year prize. This category is made up of three sub-categories – People, Produce and Places – representing the important aspects of "terroir" that are needed to produce quality wines.

This year's global judging panel is again chaired by legendary food photographer, David Loftus, and includes Kerrie McCallum who is editorial director and editor-in-chief of *Delicious*; chef Ian Kittichai who is also a restaurateur, author and television host; Tom Athron who is the CEO of Fortnum & Mason; Jamie Oliver, chef, restaurateur and food campaigner; and Rein Skullerud, senior photographer and photo editor, World Food Programme.

"Food is the drumbeat of life – too much, too little, harvest, drought, beauty and horror - it binds us all," says Caroline Kenyon, founder of the Awards. "Nothing tells these important stories more powerfully than the images photographers send us from around the world."

"Entering this competition is a great way to challenge yourself, gain exposure and connect with an inspiring community of creatives,' says Jasmina Kazemier, a previous finalist. "Even if you don't win, you gain clarity on your style, push yourself creatively and put your name on the radar. That's always worth it."

For more information and details about how to enter the competition visit **www.worldfoodphotographyawards.com** Entries close on Sunday 8 February 2026.

Weighing The Tea Yield by Marco Rutten (Netherlands), second in the Bring Home the Harvest category, World Food Photography Awards 2025 sponsored by Brocollini®.

C50 IS CANON'S MOST COMPACT CINEMA CAMERA YET

THE SMALLEST AND lightest Canon Cinema EOS series camera we've seen so far, the EOS C50 weighs in at a mere 670 grams and is smaller than the EOS R5 C body. It's still a full frame camera using the RF lens mount, but with a new 7K BSI CMOS sensor (32.3 MP for stills) mated with the 'DiG!C DV7' processor. The combo enable 3:2 aspect 'open gate' recording for format flexibility including in the vertical, and internal RAW recording at up to 7K and 50/60 fps (in 12-bit Cinema RAW Light) using the sensor's full width. The C50 can record 4K DCI at up to 100/120 fps and Full HD at up to 150/180 fps for cinematic slowmo effects. The 4K footage is oversampled from 7K for enhanced image quality. Plus, 4K video can be captured with a repositionable 2K crop (such as to give vertical or square framing) simultaneously… a feature called logically 'Simultaneous Crop Recording'. The Canon 12-bit Cinema RAW Light codec comes with three quality settings – HQ, ST and LT – plus there's the XF-AVC codec with 10-bit 4:2:2 colour and either All-Intra or LongGOP compression plus XF-AVC S and XF-HEVC S with the MP4 format. There's the choice of CFexpress Type B and SD memory card slots, but obviously the latter is limited in the bit rates it can support (so, essentially 4K or lower res).

The C50 doesn't have a physical shutter, but the sensor shutter allows 32.3 MP RAW stills to be captured at up to 40 fps with the option of pre-burst buffering. There's also a 10-bit HEIF capture mode for stills. The 'Dual Pixel CMOS AF II' hybrid system has subject recognition for people (eye/face/head/body), dogs, cats, birds, horses, motorsports, aircraft and trains for stills (people, dogs, cats and birds for video).

The sensor has dual gain conversion circuitry with the two bases set at ISO 800 and 6400 when shooting in 12-bit RAW 10-bit Canon Log2 or Log3 which, Canon says, gives a dynamic range of 15 stops.

Given its high video bit rates (topping 2000 Mbps in some instances), the C50 has a built-in cooling fan. The interfaces include a full-size HDMI output, USB Type C, a DIN timecode terminal, E3 remote control terminal, a 3.5mm microphone input, a 3.5mm headphone output and Canon's multi-function hotshoe for dedicated accessories such as an external microphone. Wireless connectivity is via WiFi and Bluetooth, and the camera supports the Frame.io Camera to Cloud service.

The EOS C50 is supplied with detachable top handle which provides two full-size XLR audio inputs and control dials, a start/stop button, and a zoom rocker control. The monitor screen is a 7.62 cm TFT LCD touch screen panel with a resolution of 1.62 megadots and has an "LCD Luminance Boost' mods to enhance visibility when shooting in bright conditions.

The Canon Cinema EOS C50 is priced at $5899 and available in November. Canon Australia provides a five-year warranty for cameras and lenses purchased from an authorised reseller. For more information visit **www.canon.com.au.**

Camera House

Credit | **Portrait photography by Margot Bishop**
Margot works at Croydon Camera House and she shot this photo with the FujiFilm X-H1 | **Lens specs** FujiFilm XF16-55mm | f/2.8 | ISO 2500

WORLD WID

FIXED LENS CAMERA WINNER

Ricoh GR IV

“The imaging performance is truly excellent – even at the higher ISO settings – and achieving results that are this good from a camera that’s this small remains at the heart of the GR series appeal. But don’t buy this camera because it’s trendy, buy it because it’s brilliant.”

RRP $2,200

MEDIUM FORMAT CAMERA WINNER

Hasselblad X2D II 100C

“The X2D II 100C is Hasselblad at the absolute peak of its game and, at every level, leaves you with just one conclusion – ‘Forget the money, I just want one’.”

RRP $12,650

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WINNER
16-300mm 1:3.5-6.7 DC OS ø67
SIGMA

ZOOM LENS – FULL FRAME WINNER

Sigma 300-600mm f/4.0 DG OS Sports

"When Sigma unveiled its astonishing 300-600mm f/4.0 DG OS Sports supertelephoto zoom, it was described as 'a dream lens' and it almost certainly is for many sports, adventure and wildlife photographers."

RRP $12,995

ZOOM LENS – CROPPED FRAME WINNER:

Sigma 16-300mm f/3.5-6.7 DC OS Contemporary

"Ultra-wide to supertelephoto in the one compact and affordable lens? Yes, and what's more, the Sigma 16-300mm has pretty decent close-up capabilities and up to six stops of image stabilisation. It looks too good to be true, but it isn't."

RRP $1,400

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PANASONIC UNVEILS FIRST LUMIX S SUPERTELEPHOTO ZOOM

THE RF MOUNT 100-500mm telezoom has been a big hit for Canon and now L mount users can have the focal range in a comparatively compact lens that's also quite affordable. The Lumix S 100-500mm f/5.0-7.1 OIS is a fraction over 196 millimetres in length and weighs 1285 grams which isn't excessively heavy for a lens with a 500mm reach. The zooming action is telescopic, so this lens does get longer as you zoom out to 500mm. It's fitted with a tripod-mounting collar, but this is detachable to help save a bit of weight when using handheld. Furthermore, the built-in optical image stabilisation gives up to 7.0 stops of correction for camera shake when using the 'Dual I.S.' tie-up with the IBIS in the Lumix S camera bodies.The external construction is fully sealed against the intrusion of dust or moisture and with insulation to allow reliable operation in sub-zero temperatures down to -10 degrees Celsius. There's also a fluorine coating on the front element to help better repel grease and water.

On the inside, the optical construction employs 19 elements in 12 groups which includes six special types – four with extra-low (ED) dispersion characteristics (two of these rated as 'Ultra ED') and two 'Ultra HR' types. Autofocusing is driven by a powerful 'Dual Phase Linear Motor' and an 'optical encoder' (as seen in the Lumix S 100mm f/2.8 macro lens) which designed to correct for any heat-related deformation in the focusing mechanism. Focusing is performed internally and the minimum focusing distance is 80 centimetres which gives a maximum magnification ratio of 1:2.7 at 500mm. The zoom's manual focusing ring can be assigned other functions such as manual aperture setting and the zooming collar can be adjusted between Tight and Smooth for optimum feel. The minimum aperture range is f/29-40 and the Lumix S 100-500mm has an 82 millimetres screwthread filter fitting.

The Panasonic Lumix S 100-500mm f/5.0-7.1 OIS zoom is priced at $3699 and will become available in Australia during November. For more information visit **www.panasonic.com.au** Panasonic Australia offers an extended five-year warranty (two-year standard warranty plus an additional three years) on Lumix camera bodies sold by an authorised Panasonic Australia reseller.

SONY LAUNCHES G MASTER SERIES 100MM F/2.8 MACRO

G
FULL TIME DMF
ON OFF
∞-0.5m
0.7m-
FULL 0.26m
OSS
ON OFF
AF MF
IRIS LOCK
E-mount

WITH ITS FE mount lens system now topping 80 models, Sony continues to add more with the latest being a G Master grade 100mm f/2.8 Macro with built-in optical stabilisation. This is the first medium telephoto macro lens in the high-performance G Master line, and it enables up to 1.4x magnification (i.e. a magnification ratio of 1:0.7) which is 1.4x life size. The lens is compatible with Sony's FE teleconverters so the 2.0x unit will give 2.8x magnification while also allowing an even longer working distance (which reduces the risk of disturbing flighty subjects).

Sony says the optical design has been optimised for macrophotography – i.e. shooting over very short focusing distances – notably chromatic aberrations. The optical construction employs 17 elements in 13 groups which includes two 'XA' types (eXtreme Aspherical) and two with extra-low dispersion (ED) characteristics. The diaphragm has 11 blades to give smoother, rounded out-of-focus effects and the minimum focus distance is 26 centimetres. Sony's 'Nano AR II' multi-coating is employed to help minimise ghosting and flare.

The AF drive employs a quartet of Sony's XD (eXtreme Dynamic) linear motors to allow for very fast adjustments at up to 120 fps. Sony notes a speed increase over the previous 90mm f/2.8 Macro of 1.9x. The new lens features a focus clutch arrangement – similar to some OM System lenses – which enables faster switching between auto and manual focusing in the field via a quick push-pull action. Focusing is performed internally.

The new 100mm macro has a weather-sealed construction along with a fluorine coating on the front element to help repel moisture, grease and dust. The aperture collar can be switched between click-stopped or continuous adjustment (the latter for finer exposure control when shooting video), and there's an iris lock to prevent accidental switch between auto and manual aperture control. There's also AF/MF focus mode switch on the lens barrel and a pair of focus hold buttons which can be set to an alternative function.

The new lens is 148 millimetres in length, weighs 646 grams and accepts 67 millimetres diameter screwthead filters. The minimum aperture is f/22.

The Sony FE 100mm f/2.8 Macro GM OSS has a price tag of $2599 and will be available in November. For more information visit **www.sony.com.au**

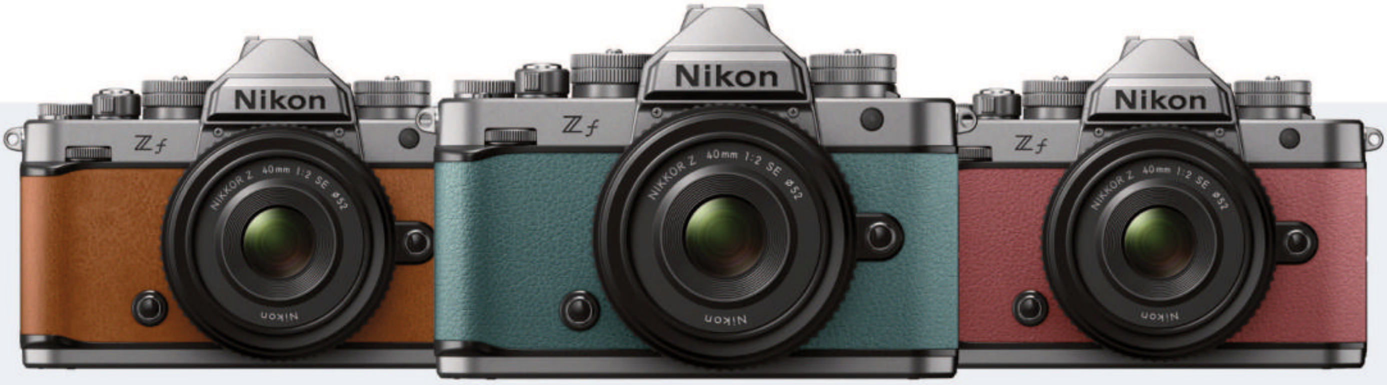
NEW OM SYSTEM TELEZOOM FIRST F/2.8-SPEED 100-400MM

OK, SO IT'S actually 50-200mm in focal range, but as it's a Micro Four Thirds lens, the effective focal length is 100-400mm which makes the new PRO series OM System telezoom a first. Its full title is the M.Zuiko Digital ED 50-200mm f/2.8 IS PRO and it's only the second OM System lens to have a white finish after the monster 150-400mm f/4.5 PRO. Already widely adopted by Canon and Sony for their telephoto lenses, the white reflects more light to help reduce internal heat build-ups which can compromise the precision of metal components. The new 50-200mm f/2.8 is weather sealed to meet the higher IP53 protection rating, matching that of the OM-1, OM-1 II, OM-3 and OM-5 II camera bodies. This also includes insulation to enable operation in subzero temperatures down to -10 degrees Celsius. Additionally, the exposed surface of the front element has a fluorine coating to help better repel moisture and grease.

Notably, the OM System 500-200mm has both internal zooming and internal focusing so the barrel length doesn't change with either operation. Given the effective focal range, it's a comparatively compact lenses measuring a little over 225 millimetres and weighing 1075 grams without the detachable tripod-mounting collar. On the inside, the optical construction employs 21 elements in 13 groups which includes a total of nine special types. These comprise two 'Super ED' types (short for 'Super Extra-Low Dispersion'), two HR types ('High Refractive Index'), one with ED glass ('Extra-Low Dispersion'), one is an aspherical element made from ED glass – designated 'EDA' ('Extra-Low Dispersion Aspherical'), and three are 'E-HR' types ('Extra-High Refractive Index'). Collectively, these correct for chromatic aberrations, spherical aberrations and distortion. The lens also employs two types of anti-reflection multi-coatings – the newer ZERO Coating II (Zuiko Extra-low Reflection Optical) on some elements, including the large-diameter front one, and the original ZERO Coating on others.

Optical image stabilisation provides up to 5.5 stops of correction for camera shake on its own and up to 7.0 stops with 'Sync IS' which combines it with the in-body systems in the higher-end OM System camera bodies. Autofocusing is via a VCM – voice coil motor – as is used in several Canon RF mount lenses mainly for its higher thrust and speed. Consequently, the 50-200mm supports continuous AF operation at 50 fps to match the top shooting speed of the OM-3 and the OM-1 duo. The zoom's minimum focusing distance is 78 centimetres which is maintained cross the full focal range and, at the effective 400mm focal length, delivers a reproduction ratio of 1:2. This is half-life size, so the new OM System zoom also has pretty useful close-up capabilities. It's also compatible with the M.Zuiko Digital teleconverters so the MC-40 1.4x model gives a 70-280mm f/4.0 telezoom and the 2.0x MC-20 model gives 100-400mm – which is effectively 200-800mm – with a constant maximum aperture of f/5.6.

The OM System M.Zuiko Digital ED 50-200mm f/2.8 IS PRO is available now, distributed by OM Digital Solutions Australia and priced at $5199. Our road test of the 50-200mm f/2.8 PRO is in this issue, or for more information visit **https://explore.omsystem.com/au/en/**



▲ Nikon Zf Silver Edition with Cognac Brown, Teal Blue and Mauve Pink inserts (left to right).

NIKON ZF NOW IN CLASSIC SILVER FINISH... AND WITH NEW INSERT COLOURS

INSPIRED BY THE FM2 35mm SLR, Nikon's Zf full frame mirrorless camera has been a huge hit in a black finish with a choice of five coloured leatherette inserts, but now there's a silver body option to replicate a chrome FM2. Along with the silver Zf body comes three new insert colours called Cognac Brown, Teal Blue and Mauve Pink. Additionally, in this market you can have your silver body with the Moss Green, Stone Grey, Sepia Brown, Bordeaux Red and Sunset Orange colours that have been available with the black finish. Likewise, the three new colours are now also available with the black body so that's a choice of eight to give your camera a bit of individuality. You can, of course, have standard black inserts with either body finish. There's a slight premium involved with the coloured inserts – $100 to be precise – because all the Zf bodies land here with the black inserts and they're changed over at Nikon Australia's service facility as required... which makes sense.

To continue the film camera vibe, Nikon has also announced a planned firmware upgrade – coming before year's end – which will add a 'Film Grain' function to the Zf. This will allow you to add a grain effect to both stills and videos (similar to Fujifilm's 'Grain Effect') with the choice of three grain sizes and six graininess strength settings. It can be combined with the camera's built-in 'Picture Control' presets or the 'Imaging Recipes' which are downloadable customised 'Picture Control' looks created by Nikon itself and Nikon users.

The Nikon Zf in silver and the new insert colours for both the black and silver bodies are available in Australia now. The Zf is priced at $3449 body only with the standard black inserts or $3549 with any of the 'Premium Exterior' colour options. Nikon Australia provides a two-year warranty for Nikon cameras and lenses purchased from an authorised reseller. For more information visit **www.nikon.com.au**

FUJIFILM BASES NEW CINE CAMERA ON GFX SENSOR

THERE'S A PRETTY good chance you won't be in the market for Fujifilm's GFX Externa 55 pro cinema camera, but we'd thought you'd like to known about it anyway. It's built around the 'GFX 102MP CMOS II HS' medium format sensor and the 'X Processor 5' engine that are used in the GFX series medium format mirrorless cameras. With its imaging area of 43.8x33.9 mm, it's the tallest sensor available in a digital cinema camera and makes the GFX Eterna 55 both extremely flexible in terms of formats and also capable of an extremely high image quality. By the way, the '55' refers to the diagonal measurement in millimetres of the sensor which is also the imaging circle diameter.

You'll be familiar with the Eterna name as one of video-orientated 'Film Simulation' profiles available in the X mount and GF mount cameras, but it was also the name of Fujifilm's movie film stocks. Fujifilm has also had a long history in building film and TV lenses so, while it's new to the category that the GFX Eterna 55 competes in – against the likes of ARRI, Blackmagic, Sony and RED – there's actually a long history in the cinema business.

The camera can record in one of five formats – GF (i.e. 4:3 aspect medium format or 'open gate'), Premista, full frame 35mm, Super 35 (i.e. close to 'APS-C') and Anamorphic 35mm – and in resolutions up to 8K DCI at 8192x4320 pixels and 17:9 aspect. Frame rates at 8K are 24 or 30 fps. The other options are 5.8K at up to 30 fps, 4K UHD and DCI at up to 60 fps, and Full HD and up to 120 fps (but there are variations according to the selected format. The codec options for internal are Apple ProRes 422/422LT/422HQ and H.265 with 10-bit 4:2:2 colour. A 12-bit RAW output or uncompressed 10-bit 4:2:2. The sensor has dual-gain output circuitry with the base levels set at ISO 800 and 3200, while Fujifilm claims a dynamic range of 14+ stops. Up to 1 6 custom 3D LUTs can be uploaded to accompany the 20 baked-in 'Film Simulations.

The camera has been released with a new GFX cine lens – the Fujinon GF 32-90mm T3.5 PZ OIS WR which is equivalent to 25-71mm. The GFX Eterna 55 is priced at a snip below $26,000 body only and the new power zoom at $8500. For more information visit **www.fujifilm.com.au**

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

Current to 31 December: Exhibition. *PIX: The Magazine That Changed Everything. PIX* was Australia's first pictorial news weekly and hit newsstands in January 1938. It delivered a new style of journalism, using photographs to tell daring stories of modern life. At the Photography Gallery, State Library Of NSW, 1 Shakespeare Place, Sydney, NSW 2000. Entry is free. Exhibition hours are 9.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Thursday, 9.00am to 5.00pm on Friday, 10.00am to 5.00pm on weekends. For more information visit **https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au**

Current to 6 February 2026: Exhibition. *You Are Here – Melbourne Memory-Scapes*. A remarkable collection of black and white aerial photographs of Melbourne and its surrounds from the 1960s, drawn from the City of Melbourne collection. At the City Gallery, Melbourne Town Hall, 90-130 Swanston Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000. Entry is free. Gallery hours are 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. For more information visit citycollection.**melbourne.vic.gov.au**

7 – 30 November: Exhibitions, workshops and events. Head On Photo Festival 2025, Sydney. Major exhibitions are at Bondi Pavilion Gallery and outdoor displays throughout Paddington Reservoir Gardens and along Bondi Beach. Festival launch is on 7 November. Exhibitions are free. Visit **https://headon.org.au/festival** for more details.

6 December to 22 February 2026: Exhibition. *Olive Cotton And Her Contemporaries*. This exhibition brings together Cotton's photographs and the work of her leading international peers including key modernist photographers such as Dora Maar, Berenice Abbott, Lucia Moholy, Edward Weston and Tina Modotti. At the Gippsland Art Gallery, 70 Foster Street, Sale, Victoria 3850. Gallery hours are 9.00am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday, 10.00am to 4.00pm on weekends. For more information visit **https://www.gippslandartgallery.com**

Olive Cotton, Teacup ballet, 1935

14 March 2026 to 10 May 2026: Exhibition. *Olive Cotton And Her Contemporaries*. This exhibition brings together Cotton's photographs and the work of her leading international peers including key modernist photographers such as Dora Maar, Berenice Abbott, Lucia Moholy, Edward Weston and Tina Modotti. At the Cowra Regional Art Gallery, 77 Darling Street, Cowra, NSW 2794. Gallery hours are 10.00am to 4.00pm Tuesday to Saturday, 10.00am to 2.00pm on Sunday. For more information visit **https://www.cowraartgallery.com.au**

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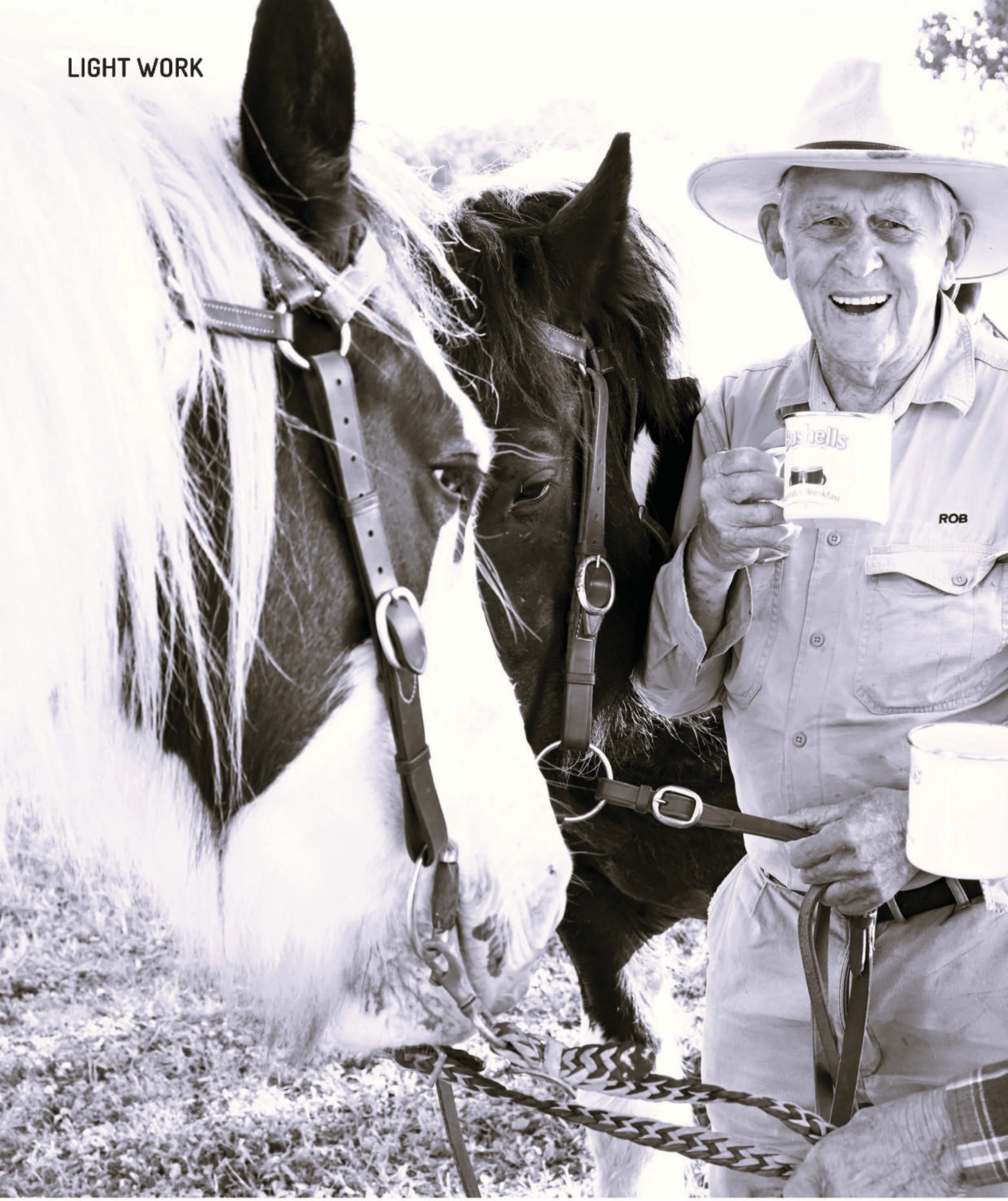
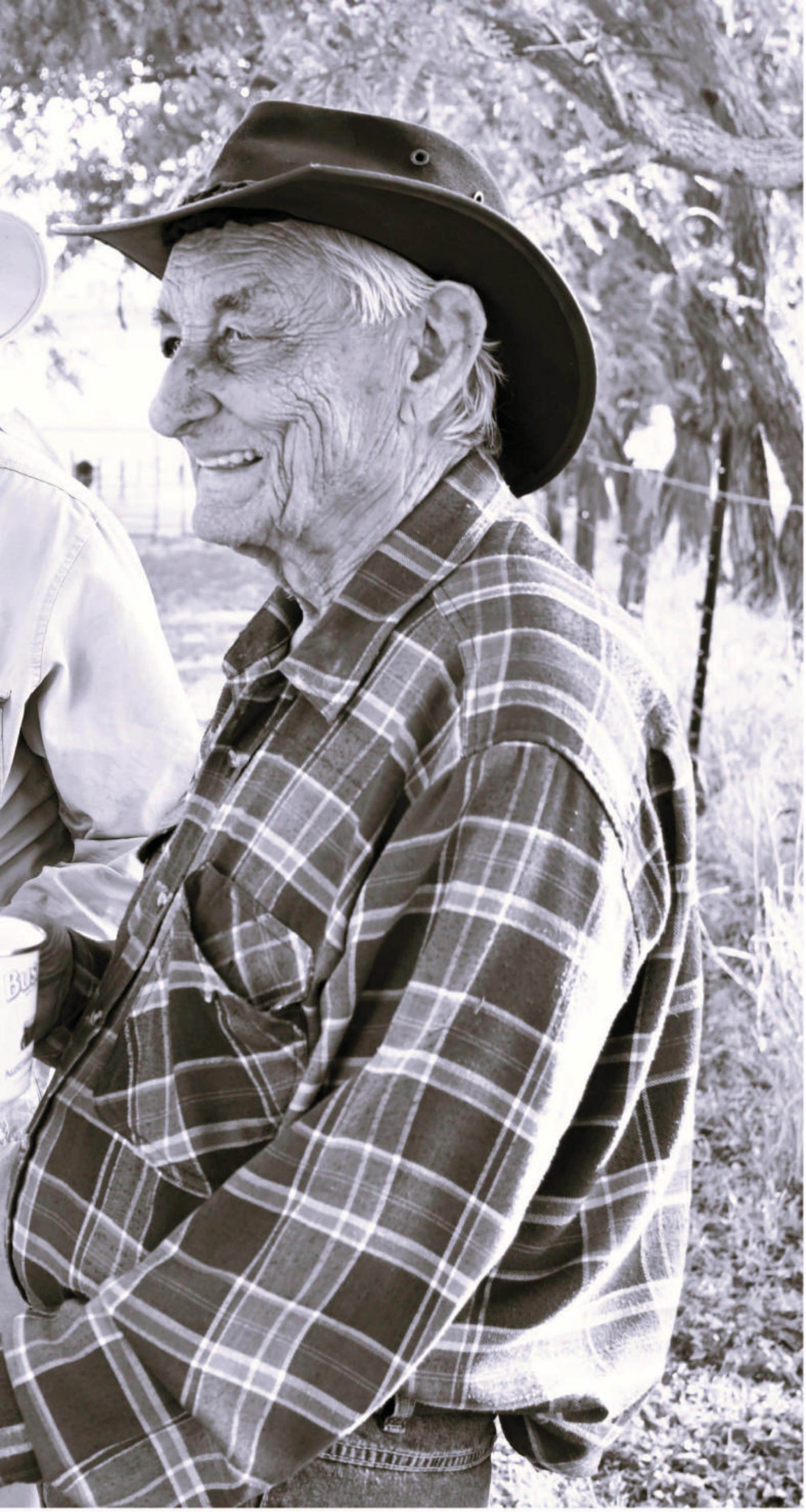


Photograph by Amy Ahchay, winner 6th sixth Rural Aid Spirit of the Bush photography competition, copyright 2025.

THE SPIRIT OF THE BUSH

The Story

The sixth annual Spirit of the Bush photography competition is a celebration of the resilience, beauty and community spirit that define rural Australia.



Rural Aid CEO John Warlters says the competition continues to reveal the stories that often go unseen. “This year’s photos are a moving tribute to life outside the city limits. They tell stories of perseverance, pride and connection. There’s an authenticity to these images that resonates. Whether it’s a family working through drought, or a breathtaking sunrise over a remote property, the spirit of the bush shines through.”

The Photograph

Amy Ahchay from Calliope in Queensland captured the hearts of the judges with a candid image of local countrymen Rob and Gordon sharing a laugh over a cuppa in the paddock. “It’s a moment that sums up life in the bush,” says Amy. “Tough on the outside, but grounded in warmth, humour, and mateship.”

A first-time entrant, Amy says being recognised is both humbling and a celebration of the stories that often go untold in rural Australia.

“I spotted Rob and Gordon deep in conversation across the paddock and just had to capture the moment. It was the perfect snapshot of bush life, two country larrikins, their horses, a cuppa, and a good laugh.

“To me, this is what the spirit of the bush is all about. It’s raw, it’s real, but it’s also full of heart. Mateship, storytelling, and that unshakable sense of connection that ties rural communities together.

“This was my first time entering, and it’s very exciting to be part of something that celebrates country life.”

All the winning images in this year’s competition will feature across Rural Aid’s campaigns, publications and social media, helping raise awareness of life in the bush and the people who call it home.

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2026 Camera Magazine Imaging Awards

It's been a more exciting year for new imaging products than we've experienced for quite a while, with plenty of evidence that the industry is feeling more buoyant and prepared to start taking risks with more adventurous designs. It's very good news for use end-users and gave the judges plenty to mull over when selecting the latest CMIA winners.

Report by *Australian Camera* editor Paul Burrows.

In this era of rapid change, a year is a very long time in any industry and certainly a lot has happened in the imaging business over the last 12 months. For starters, it finally looks like we're recovering from the multiple hits of the smartphone – which decimated the compact camera business – and the many and varied impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic which have been ongoing for quite a while. Economic uncertainties remain, but there are plenty of signs that our industry is looking at the future with more confidence. Well, how else do you explain the Sigma BF, Fujifilm's X Half and the GFX100R, a few cameras with sharp-intake-of-breath price tags, and a near-deluge of more exotic or highly specialised lenses.

Very few of these products will sell in significant numbers, but it doesn't matter when your bread-and-butter stuff is doing so well. Flights-of-fancy, whimsies and indulgences can be afforded when the market is getting back to full health, and they're a key factor in stimulating interest, excitement and, yes, a sudden desire to buy something new. Of course, the key imaging technologies continue to evolve so there are always improvements to be had with every new generation of both hardware and software. However, with maturity the advances can become more incremental and perhaps not really enough to convince you to upgrade… at least not this time around. Something more out of left field, however, may well tempt you which is undoubtedly why we're now seeing more adventures in camera design and feature sets with the aim of going beyond mere practicality and performance. The X Half and the BF, for example, put a lot more emphasis on the experience of use, rather than simply fast-tracking you to a result. With these cameras, the destination is just as important as the journey which is something that's sometimes been missing with digital imaging when the emphasis has mostly been on just how much technology can be brought into play when you press the shutter button. Fujifilm's X Half goes further by artificially imposing film-camera limitations – such as a fixed ISO – while still ultimately delivering a digital file with all its post-production possibilities. Just how appealing this cross-over approach is going to be remains to be seen, but some may find it a more convenient option than going all the way with film… and actually shooting film. The so-called film revival is still in need of the boost that would come with the involvement of a mainstream manufacturer with a mainstream camera. Yes, the Pentax 17 has certainly been a hit with a certain type of user, but as a half-frame 35mm compact – and a quirky one at that – it's not what many would-be 'analogue' photographers would choose to shoot with. It should be noted again that the vinyl record revival really took off when the main hi-fi companies restarted making new turntables and now that market sector is bigger than it ever was from entry-level to high-end esoterica with six-figure price tags. Nobody, so far, has followed the 17 and Ricoh (owner of the Pentax brand), it would seem, now has bigger fish to fry with its sure-fire profitable GR series digital compacts. Perhaps a revival of the original 35mm R1 or GR1 might be a better bet as a foray into film photography, but right now it's flat-out meeting demand for the latest GR IV model which has carried over the cult camera status from its many predecessors.

Of course, the GR series never went away, but the GR IV's timing is close to impeccable as compact cameras are suddenly cool again. The seemingly out-of-nowhere rapid rise in demand has also seen Canon crank up production of its PowerShot G7X III – which has also actually still been around all this time – and its very likely a number of other manufacturers are looking through their back catalogues to see what might be feasibly given a make-over and reissued. Compacts will never be as big as they were during the height of 35mm's popularity or the first decade or so of digital models, but if they gain fashion status – perhaps simply by virtue of being a 'real camera' as opposed to a smartphone – then this revival could be long-term. As will always be the case now, the emphasis will be on higher-end models (although, that said, a few cheapies are starting to make an appearance)

Another notable trend gathering momentum is the compact cine camera based on a mirrorless platform… so far, Canon's RF mount EOS C50, Nikon's Z mount ZR and Sony's FX2 with its FE mount. Of course, Sony was really here first with its full frame FX3 and then the 'APS-C' FX30, but the new FX2 is the package that's being chased by the others. Compared to a hybrid mirrorless camera, these models are primarily (or, indeed, exclusively) video cameras before anything else, offering more modularity to suit different applications while still being comparatively compact and, importantly, comparatively affordable.

Demand for video content continues to drive camera design at all levels from small solo presentations to full-scale multi-crew productions and, in turn, there's a growing emphasis on lenses specifically designed for the requirements of shooting video. This is now progressing beyond just 'hybrid' lenses – essentially lens for photography that can be adapted for video – to fully-fledged cine lenses with geared control collars, T stops, silent operation and optical designs which minimise focus breathing.

Cine lenses have always been around, of course, but now many more photo lens makers are getting involved such as Sigma. Along with the ZR dedicated cinema camera body – the first fruit of its acquisition of cinema camera maker RED – Nikon has announced it will produce a new line of Z Cinema lenses utilising its full frame mirrorless system's Z mount.

In lenses more generally, adventure is certainly evident in a year of quite fabulous designs made possible by the design freedoms afforded by the mirrorless camera configuration. Sigma's stonking 300-600mm f/4.0 – which elicited a collective gasp from the audience when it was first unveiled – has since been followed up with a 12mm f/1.4, a 135mm f/1.4, a 200mm f/2.0 and a 20-200mm f/3.5-6.3 zoom. And these are just Sigma's full frame offerings. Other notables are Sony's FE 50-150mm f/2.0 G Master zoom, the OM System 50-200mm f/2.8 PRO (equivalent to a 100-400mm), Panasonic's Lumix S 100-500mm f/5.0-7.1 and Samyang's ongoing collaboration with Schneider- Kreuznach which has yielded models such as the AF 14-24mm f/2.8 FE. Additionally, some of the ever-expanding number of Chinese lens makers are doing very interesting things too, but virtually none of them have direct representation in Australia which makes obtaining test samples something of a challenge. An exception is Laowa which at least has an Australian Website and also distributes its products to bricks-and-mortar camera shops around the country.

BOTH STYLING AND DESIGN ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE HUMANS RESPOND TO THINGS THAT ARE AESTHETICALLY PLEASING OR EVOKE AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION.

So, apart from headline-making features or specifications, what else are we looking for in a Camera Magazine Imaging Awards winner? Well, of course, it still must actually work effectively and deliver on its promises with either operational benefits and/or performance enhancements… ideally both. And, beyond these all-important objective aspects, there are the more subjective elements of a product, especially a camera, to consider.

Both styling and design are important because humans respond to things that are aesthetically pleasing or evoke an emotional connection. This is certainly part of the appeal of retro-styled cameras such as Nikon's Zf and the OM System OM-3, along with the intuitive nature and sheer logic of a traditional dial-based control layout. In practice, ergonomics are critical because these are the points where we physically interact with hardware, so it not only has to feel right, but effortlessly and efficiently assist with the achievement of our objectives. This is particularly important with cameras because these are the instruments – along with lenses – that help turn our visions into realities which makes for a quite unique relationship which has not only the physical aspect in terms of handling and operation, but also emotional and even sometimes psychological components too. Not surprisingly, these are harder to factor into the judging process because everybody has different likes and dislikes derived from numerous influences and ideas (just check out the online comments that follow any new product announcement), but it's also pretty obvious when something has been done well and delivers tangible benefits in one way or another.

Price is also certainly a consideration, but more in the context of value rather than what the cost is, although certainly something that is considered to be excessively over-priced would be marked down. However, the camera market continues the trend towards higher-end models with every successive generation, and so the more budget-friendly entry-level category is on the decline. You get more for your money, but the initial outlay is steadily becoming greater. Just whether it's now viable to make more budget-friendly cameras in this day and age is debatable, but affordability will always be an issue when the cost of living is on the rise more generally.

So, in a nutshell, there's a lot to take into account when picking a winner in each of the CMIA categories so everybody who has had a part in bringing one of these products to the market should be very proud. It's an achievement.

ABOUT THE CAMERA MAGAZINE IMAGING AWARDS

The first awards were run in 1981 when the magazine was called *Camera Craft*, and there was just one category – The Australian Camera of the Year (for the record, won by the Olympus OM-10 35mm SLR). Subsequently, the number of categories has grown to reflect developments in the industry and the arrival of new technologies. The categories are also revised on occasions as new product sectors emerge (such as mirrorless cameras) or others decline (i.e. DSLRs).

This year the period of eligibility for the 2026 Camera Magazine Imaging Awards ran from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 and extended to any product within each of the categories that was released onto the mainstream Australian market during this time.

Another requirement for eligibility is that a product must be available for purchase by the time we announce the winners. This means being physically available at retail outlets in all the country's major metropolitan centres as well as from online sellers.

We spend the whole year compiling long lists of potential winners and these are fine-tuned as we go along, including after we've been involved with the annual TIPA World Awards judging earlier in the year. All the eligible products in each category are evaluated on several design, operational and performance criteria. The key consideration is just how effectively has the design brief been met and whether the product delivers everything that's promised, including in all performance areas. Additionally, being a member of the Technical Image Press Association, we also access all the performance data from the Testlab facility in Cologne, Germany, which conducts TIPA's fully independent camera and lens tests.

Nikon
Z
NIKKOR
Z DX 16-50mm 1:3.5-6.3 VR ⌀46
Fn1
Fn2
CAMERA
MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
SPONSORED BY CameraHouse
WINNER

CONSUMER MIRRORLESS CAMERA
NIKON Z50II

Nikon built its reputation on building exceptionally fine high-end cameras, but ever since its very first entry-level model – the EM 35mm SLR in 1979 – it's shown that it can balance capabilities with a lower cost quite adeptly. OK, so the EM wasn't loved by everybody, but it kicked off a long line of interchangeable lens cameras – SLRs, DSLRs and now mirrorless – that made owning a Nikon more accessible. Prices have risen across the board in the mirrorless era so affordability here isn't quite what it was with DSLRs, but Nikon's original Z50 represented exceptional value while still offering all the essential ingredients of the Z mount system. With some key upgrades – such as a faster processor and brighter viewfinder – the Z50II is a better package again, but still with value-for-money very much to the fore.

The 'APS-C' sensor size translates into a more compact body, but with all the ergonomic attributes of Nikon's full frame Z mount cameras. It handles superbly – the grip is still a good size and comfortable too – with a typically Nikon control layout that puts a lot of operations directly at your fingertips. It's old school without going full-on retro but converts from DSLRs – a growing cohort now – will still be able to find their way around without any problems. Nikon's latest gen 'EXPEED 7' processor delivers a swag of upgrades including the possibility of shooting JPEGs at either 15 fps or 30 fps with continuous autofocusing and pre-capture buffering. The list of recognised subjects for autofocusing and tracking expands to nine (up from just three previously) and there's the '3D Tracking AF' option for more faster and reliable tracking with any subject.

Another notable update is a much-expanded selection of 11 'Picture Control' presets – including Flat Monochrome, Deep Tone Monochrome and Rich Tone Portrait – along with 20 'Creative Picture Control' settings plus the 'Flexible Color Picture Control' function for downloading custom profiles created in NX Studio and which allows much more scope for fine-tuning than the in-camera adjustments. This provides much more scope of creativity when it comes to customising the look of an image… a capability that's generally limited to higher end cmeras. Conveniently too, the Z50II has a dedicated button to directly access a set of selected 'Picture Controls'. On the video side, there's now 10-bit 4:2:2 colour, the N.Log recording, the HDR HLG profile and 4K up to 50/60 fps (albeit with a crop) and Full HD up to 100/120 fps.

At the price point, it's best feature set you can buy, remembering that you also get a super EVF which most of the Z50II's rivals don't have and plenty of other higher-end goodies that normally cost more. In fact, it's remarkable that Nikon can do all this for the money. Be very glad that it does.

FUJINON ASPHERICAL LENS
SUPER EBC XF 16-50mm 1:2.8-4.8 R LM WR ⌀58
CAMERA
MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
SPONSORED BY CameraHouse
WINNER

ENTHUSIAST MIRRORLESS CAMERA
FUJIFILM X-E5

Fujifilm's combination of its 40.2 megapixels 'X-Trans CMOS 5 HR' sensor and latest-generation 'X Processor 5' engine has proven a winner in all the various cameras it has served in since it made its debut in the X-H2. In the compact, rangefinder-style X-E5 it creates a potent combination of portability and performance that's works just as well as an interchangeable lens alternative to X100VI or a more compact alternative to the X-T5. And, of course, compared to the X-M5, there's an EVF which for many photographers is a must-have feature.

So, is the X-E5 the pick of the current generation Fujifilm X mount cameras, at least for non-professional shooters? It's hard to go past with its particular combination of size, styling and specifications which make it a superb all-rounder, further enhanced by a revised control layout which includes a nifty dial for direct access to Fujifilm's famed 'Film Simulation' profiles. There's also now a small handgrip – at both the front and rear – which enhances both comfort and a more secure hold. So the camera's very appealing looks are backed up by its excellent handling and ergonomics. Put simply, the X-E5 is a joy to use, combining traditional control elements which add to the experience and contemporary aid such as a touchpad 'Quick Menu' which adds to the efficiency. The main feature set is shared with the X-E5's X-T series siblings so you get subject-recognition autofocusing and tracking, 10-bit HEIF capture, in-body image stabilisation (IBIS) for up to seven stops of correction, and video recording at up to 6.2K and 25/30 fps (albeit with a crop). There's the current full complement of 'Film Simulation' profiles, plus a facility for separately creating and storing three user-created "recipes". Here you can you all the adjustable profile parameters (such as colour, contrast and sharpness) and also mix in the various effects processes to create your own custom 'looks'.

Well proven elsewhere across the Fujifilm X mount range, the image quality is superb and the sensor also has 'dual conversion gain' output circuits which enhance the high ISO performance. In any area then, it's hard to fault the X-E5. As we noted on our original road-test, "It really is an enticing proposition and, as a result, it's a small camera that's also big on value".

PROFESSIONAL MIRRORLESS CAMERA FULL FRAME

SONY ALPHA A1 II

SONY
α 1
ZEISS
CAMERA MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
CameraHouse
WINNER

There were no doubt high hopes when Sony launched its foray into interchangeable lens cameras after purchasing Konica Minolta's imaging business. However, even the most optimistic could not have predicted how much Sony would achieve here in a little under two decades… market leader in a number of countries around the world, the most extensive lens system in the mirrorless world (a major feat in itself) and building professional-level cameras that can win against the companies that have traditionally long dominated the category – Canon and Nikon. Of course, the Minolta DNA helped kick things off, but Sony has very much been doing its own thing with the Alpha mirrorless system and pretty well kicking goals all the way… and showing that it understood photographers as well as it has understood video-makers.

The original Alpha 1 – or, if you prefer, the A1 – wasn't Sony's first go at a pro-grade ILC because there was a DSLR, the A900 in 2008, which was a full frame tour-de-force, but perhaps still just a bit too early in the piece. The A1 certainly helped established Sony's pro-end credentials, but now that's there's so many pro-level FE mount lenses and a proven track record of building high-performance camera bodies, but the Mark II model now muscles into the category with much more confidence and swagger. It improves on much of what the previous camera could do, and has a set of specs with more winning numbers than a Lotto draw. For example, the A1 II has blackout-free continuous shooting with full AF/AE adjustment at up to 30 fps and can track complex subject movements with AF/AE calculations at up to 120 fps. And it'll still do 20 fps with lossless compressed RAW files. There's pre-capture buffering, multi-shot high-res capture, AI-based in-camera noise reduction processing for JPEGs, up to 8.5 stops of stabilisation, and 'human pose estimation' is added to the subject recognition which also has a customisable Auto mode (i.e. you can be selective about what subjects will be recognised). And there's still 50.1 megapixels res on tap via a stacked sensor supported by dual processors to leverage its speed in all areas, including the autofocusing.

Not surprisingly, the A1 II is also a pretty handy video camera, recording 8K at up to 30 fps (oversampled from 8.6K) and 4K at up to 50/60 fps, both with 10-bit 4:2:2 colour. There's the option of 4K at up to 100/120 fps for slowmo effects, albeit with a slight 1.1x crop. The Full HD frame rates run up to 200/240 fps for 10x slow-motion effects (at a 24 fps output). You can import up to 16 LUTs (look-up tables) for creating cinematic 'looks', and with the wider S-Log3 gamma profile now matching Sony's pro-level cinema cameras.

A superb 9.44 megadots OLED EVF (which can refresh at up to 240 fps) is just one element of the user interface that enables the A1 II's immense capabilities to be accessed and deployed with optimum ease and efficiency. It is a camera that compellingly emphasises just how far Sony has come since the Alpha system was launched in 2006 and has subsequently been at the forefront of many key developments, including the first full frame mirrorless cameras. Right now, it's the Alpha One in both name and status.

OM SYSTEM
OM-3
CAMERA MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
CameraHouse
WINNER

PROFESSIONAL MIRRORLESS CAMERA CROPPED FRAME

OM SYSTEM OM-3

The legendary OM compact 35mm SLRs have frequently informed the camera design thinking in the digital era of both Olympus and then its imaging business successor OM Digital Solutions. Reducing size has been a constant theme since the E-400 DSLR which was introduced in 2006 and various film camera design elements have been reworked over time, especially with the mirrorless OM-D series. With the new OM-3 – remember that there was a 35mm camera with the same model number – a much more unabashed homage is being paid to the OM heritage.

With this camera, OM Digital Solutions has perhaps got the closest to the ideal of a 'digital OM' which has been a stated intention since the E-400. It is arguably the most classically styled mirrorless camera we've seen so far, even going without a handgrip to maintain dimensions very close to those of the original OM-1. Compared in silhouette, the new OM-3 is only very marginally wider and taller than the 35mm SLR which changed the world in 1972. Yet under its elegant covers it's essentially the OM-1 Mark II with the same 20 megapixels stacked BSI-type sensor and the 'TruePic X' processor. The all-metal bodyshell is weather-sealed to the IP53 standard with insulation for sub-zero shooting and, despite the more compact size, it still uses the higher-capacity BLX-1 battery pack from the OM-1 models.

Despite being many, many times more complex than the camera it acknowledges, the digital OM-3 still handles with the same uncomplicated purity and with the sense that it's up to you to make the most of what it has to offer. And that's a lot which includes the OM-1 II's stacked BSI CMOS sensor, all the 'Computational Photography' functions, the 'Cross Quad Pixel AF' system and continuous shooting at full res up to 120 fps. OMDS has still managed to squeeze in in-body image stabilisation which is good for 6.5 stops of correction, and sensor shifting also drives the multi-shot high-res capture which delivers 50 MP with hand-held shooting and 80 MP when the camera is on a tripod. The star of the CP functions – as it is on the OM-1 II – is digital graduated neutral density filter effects which are full controllable in the frame, and do away with having to struggle to adjust filters in a holder attached the front of the lens… a near impossible challenge in bad weather. This feature is just one highlight among a great many, making the OM-3 as advanced on the inside as it is classical looking on the outside.

It's a design that quite seamlessly melds its traditional elements with the modern. Consequently, there's an integrity to the whole thing that really add to the overall appeal… because here is a camera that's as pretty as on the outside, but a mirrorless powerhouse on the inside and with great ergonomics sowing it all together beautifully. It's the prettiest pro-level camera since… well, the last OM-3.

HYBRID MIRRORLESS CAMERA
PANASONIC LUMIX S1R II

LUMIX
LUMIX
RII
S 1:4 / 24-105mm Φ77
CAMERA MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
CameraHouse
WINNER

When Panasonic says that the Lumix S1R II is "…our best ever hybrid mirrorless camera", you must sit up and take some notice. After all, this is the company that invented the concept of a hybrid still/video mirrorless camera with its GH1 model back in 2009. Since then, every iteration of the Micro Four Thirds GH series has become even more capable in both areas and this has carried over into the full frame Lumix S family, now all moving into their second-generation models. Of course, the S1H has been the hybrid king – and we suspect its Mark II replacement will take over the crown – but for now the S1R II is very much the complete package for photographers who shoot video and videographers who shoot stills.

It's been on the same diet as the S5 II models so it's quite a bit more compact and lighter than its predecessor, but performance boosts come from a new sensor with faster read-out speeds, a more powerful (and also speedier) processor, uprated in-body image stabilisation, a much-expanded list of subject recognition modes for autofocusing and tracking, and a whole bunch of new creative features such as the 'Real Time LUTs' with an ever-expanding library of distinctive looks. Dual gain circuitry – which Panasonic tags 'Dual Native ISO' – enhances the high ISO performance for both stills and video by significantly reducing noise. There's up to eight stops of correction via IBIS, and the S1R II can shoot at up to 40 fps with continuous AF and either full-res RAW or JPEG capture.

The camera's video specs are way too extensive to list here, but among the highlights are 8K UHD in the 16:9 aspect and at 8.1 K which delivers a 17:9 aspect frame. Internal recording in Apple ProRes RAW or RAW HQ is available at up to 5.8K 17:9, or in ProRes 422 or 422HQ. The full 3:2 aspect sensor area is available for 'open gate' recording at 6.4K for format flexibility. The full width of the sensor is used for 4K UHD and DCI recording at up to 100/120 fps and with 10-bit 4:2:2 colour, and there's again the option of here of using the ProRes 422 or 422HQ at up codecs to 50/60 fps. You get the picture… the S1R II will do pretty much anything you want in terms of resolutions, frame rates, codecs, colour subsampling and compression methodology.

It's immensely capable, but importantly everything is easily accessible via the efficient ergonomics and well-organised menus. Panasonic emphasises functionality over anything that might be a distraction, and so the S1R II is all about getting the job done and getting it done well. It works.

CAMERA MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
CameraHouse
WINNER
GR LENS f=18.3mm 1:2.8
GR

FIXED LENS CAMERA
RICOH GR IV

Ricoh has plenty of form in these awards with a string of past winners – FF-70 (1985, and our very first Compact Camera of the Year), Mirai (1988), Shotmaster Zoom 105 Plus (1993), R1 (1995), GR Digital (2005), Caplio GX100 (2007), GR Digital III (2009), CX4 (2010) and GXR (2010). You'll note three of this year's ancestors in this list, including the model which kicked off one of the most successful camera lines ever – certainly in terms of sustained sales over a very long period – in the slim form of the 35mm R1. The same basic formula has been used ever since and certainly from 1997's GR1 onward, cult status has been carried over from one generation to the next, and nor did it miss a beat in the transition from film to digital.

The GR IV is destined to continue the legend. It retains all the core values of a super-slim all-metal body, a high-quality 28mm-equivalent prime lens, a photography-orientated feature set and a 'real camera' control interface. However, the GR IV is definitely as case of the same, but different because there's a new sensor, a new processor, a redesigned optical construction for the lens, new autofocus algorithms, uprated in-body image stabilisation and a massive increase in the internal storage. Add to this many small tweaks here and there, and the new model improves on just about everything that's gone before. The sensor gets a small bump in resolution, but more importantly is a BSI-type design to the benefit of the uniformity of sensitivity across its surface. To match, the lens has an additional aspherical element to enhance corner sharpness. New autofocusing algorithms improve the speed and precision of the hybrid phase/contrast detection system and there are a couple of new auto white balance modes including a 'Warm Priority' option. A revamping of the control layout – essentially back to what worked best with the GR II – enhances the ergonomics, making the GR IV surprisingly intuitive and logical to use for such a small camera. And it is small… in fact, the smallest camera with an 'APS-C' sensor currently on the market. The tweaks to the sensor, autofocusing, image stabilisation and high ISO IQ mean it also delivers a big performance for a camera that will easily slip into a jacket pocket. The GR legend is in good hands, but there are much sounder reasons for buying this camera than just because it's fashionable. It's totally brilliant too.

MEDIUM FORMAT CAMERA

HASSELBLAD X2D II 100C

HASSELBLAD
H
2.5/55
ø72mm
CAMERA
MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
CameraHouse
WINNER

For the first time in a long time, there was some serious competition in this category. Yes, Fujifilm and Hasselblad are the only ones in the category currently introducing new products on a regular basis, but there was the former's GFX100RF and GFX100S II to consider alongside the latter's X2D II 100C. The GFX100RF gets a big look-in because it's the first digital-era fixed-lens medium format camera – creating an unmatched combination of portability and performance – while the GFX100S II is priced to compete with the high-end full frame bodies, but with the undeniable appeal of its 102 megapixels sensor. But the Hasselblad is more than just a mild revision of the original X2D 100C; there have been significant changes everywhere, including the feature set, the operability and, quite conclusively, the imaging performance.

The original X1D mirrorless body exuded real Scandi cool, and the subsequent generation models have not only got even cooler, but also significantly more capable. The X2D II 100C is Hasselblad at the absolute peak of its game and, at every level, leaves you with just one conclusion – 'Forget the money, I just want one'. With its graphite grey matte finish, it's undoubtedly one of the best-looking cameras on the market, but this beauty is now much more than skin deep. The headline act is HDR capture as the default – with the option of either HEIFs or Ultra HDR JPEGs – and a high-brightness, P3 gamut OLED-type monitor screen for viewing. You will never look at the world in quite the same way again. There's continuous PDAF autofocusing with subject recognition, a massive ten stops of image stabilisation with five-axis correction, a dynamic range of 15.3 stops, a massive 1.0 TB of internal storage on an SSD and revised controls to enhance operational efficiency, especially with the addition of a joystick-type navigator.

Hasselblad has also been diligent with regular new lens releases, so its XCD system is now pretty competitive – a 28-76mm equivalent standard zoom is the latest addition – so the X2D II 100C is well supported with optics to make the most of all the dynamic range and resolution that it's able to deliver. This is, without doubt, the best X series mirrorless camera Hasselblad built so far and, more notably, it finally realises all the promise that could be seen in that first model, but which just was not quite there. Everything comes together brilliantly in the X2D II 100C and the user experience is now thoroughly enjoyable… with the promise of great rewards.

Hasselblad's illustrious history is littered with legendary cameras that in one way or another enhanced photography… this is another of them.

PRIME LENS – FULL FRAME

NIKKOR Z 35mm f/1.2 S

Ultra-fast primes are A Thing at the moment so competing in this category were Zeiss's Otus 50mm f/1.4 and 80mm f/1.4 (reissued for mirrorless mounts), Canon's RF 24mm f/1.4L VCM, Sony's FE 16mm f/1.8 G and Sigma's 200mm f/2.0 DG OS Sports which is a first for mirrorless cameras. That Nikon's Z mount 35mm f/1.2 S beat all comers tells you something about just how good this lens really is.

The challenge for Nikon is that it already offers an exceptionally capable 35mm f/1.4 model which isn't an S line model, but still delivers a creditable performance and it's smaller, lighter and cheaper… much cheaper. Consequently, the f/1.2 lens needs to prove it's all worth the extra half-stop of speed because it's big, heavy and pretty pricey. Of course, since it's starring here, it obviously does. In fact, it's one of the best performing wide-angle primes Nikon has made for a long time, and it's up there with the very best from any brand.

CAMERA
MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
CameraHouse
WINNER
S

Not surprisingly, a lot of work has gone into the optical design to deal with the challenges of a wide-angle focal length with a very large maximum aperture. There's a total of 17 elements arranged in 15 groups and which includes no fewer than seven special types – three with extra-low dispersion (ED) characteristics and three with aspherical surfaces along with one which is both ED glass and aspherically-shaped.

The aspherical elements are designed to correct for distortion as well as spherical aberrations and coma. They also contribute to more uniform sharpness and brightness across the frame. The ED glass elements correct for chromatic aberrations, but also help optimise sharpness. Additionally, the lens relays a profile to the camera body which drives automatic corrects for distortion and chromatic aberrations as well as vignetting and diffraction when shooting JPEGs (and also HEIFs). Three Nikon multi-coating technologies are used to minimise internal reflections which have the potential to be problematic with such a complex optical design with a very bright maximum aperture. The effective suppression of flare and ghosting benefits both contrast and colour when shooting in side lighting or even with the sun located near the edges of the frame.

Clearly, Nikon's objective here has been image quality first and any other consideration second – including the cost – with no compromises and it's resulted in an all-round superlative performance at any aperture and any focusing distance. There just aren't the issues with corner sharpness, vignetting or chromatic aberrations which often just isn't the case even some other so-called high-performance fast primes. Consequently, you can explore all the creative possibilities of shooting at f/1.2 – chiefly selective focusing – without any compromises to image quality. This is a big plus for both photographers and video-makers and puts this Nikon lens in an elite class.

CAMERA
MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
CameraHouse
WINNER

PRIME LENS – CROPPED FRAME
FUJIFILM XF 500mm f/5.6 R LM OIS WR

While the current generation of camera bodies are contributing significantly to the popularity of Fujifilm's X mount mirrorless system, the growing list of more specialised lens is also playing a big part. As well as upgrading a number of its key models – such as the XF 16-55mm f/2.8 zoom – Fujifilm is also filling out its lens line-up with everything from ultra-wides to supertelephotos.

The Fujinon XF 500mm f/5.6 R LM OIS WR has obvious appeal for sports, adventure and wildlife photographers. This isn't just because the effective focal length is 762mm, but being for the 'APS-C' sensor size, it's also comparatively compact and weighs a shade over 1.33 kilos which makes handheld shooting quite feasible. Better still, optical image stabilisation gives up to 5.5 stops of correction for camera shake to there's more flexibility when shooting in low-light situations.

Physically, it's designed to deal with tough outdoor conditions being fully weather sealed and able to operate in subzero temperatures down to -10 degrees Celsius. The exposed surface of the front element has a fluorine coating to help better repel moisture and grease while also making it easier to clean. On the inside, the optical construction is designed to counter the common supertelephoto including chromatic aberrations and reduced sharpness and brightness in the frame corners. Focusing is performed internally – another plus as far as handling is concerned – and uses a high-speed linear AF motor to give a claimed focusing speed of just 0.33 seconds. The minimum focusing distance is 2.75 metres which gives a magnification ratio of 1:5… that's one-fifth life size and not bad for a lens this long.

The XF 500mm f/5.6 is obviously a quite specialised lens, but it gives X mount shooters something that they've haven't had before… namely, a native prime supertelephoto that's neither overly bulky nor, it has to be said, excessively expensive. A superlative optical performance is its biggest selling point with the handling, functionality and specs ticking plenty of boxes if you want lots of telephoto lens without breaking your back… or the bank.

ZOOM LENS – FULL FRAME
SIGMA 300-600mm f/4.0 DG OS SPORTS

When Sigma unveiled its astonishing 300-600mm f/4.0 DG OS Sports supertelephoto zoom, it was described as "a dream lens" and it almost certainly is for many sports, adventure and wildlife photographers. It's not often a new product elicits a collective gasp from an audience, but that's what happened at the 300-600mm's Japanese launch, followed by a big round of applause. It's perhaps not surprising given the technical challenges Sigma has to overcome to build this lens with its comparatively fast constant aperture of f/4.0, exceptional optical performance across the full focal range and – the biggie – keeping it to a physical size and weight that makes handholding actually quite feasible.
It's a feat of both optical and mechanical engineering and, given what you're getting, pretty good value too. All the 600mm f/4.0 mirrorless system primes currently available cost significantly more… in some cases twice as much.

Notably too, Sigma's 300-600mm is just under 47 centimetres in length and weighs in at 3.985 kilograms. Consequently, it's very similar dimensionally to a 600mm f/4.0 prime lens. Both zooming and focusing are performed internally so the length of the lens doesn't extend at all. The main construction uses magnesium alloy barrel tubes and is weather sealed along with a fluorine coating on the front element to help repel moisture and grease. The optical design comprises 28 elements in 21 groups which includes six of Sigma's 'FLD' types and one 'SLD' type. The 'FLD' elements – it stands for 'F Low Dispersion' – are designed to have the same super extra-low dispersion characteristics of fluorite glass without being as expensive to produce. Along with the 'SLD' elements, these significantly reduce chromatic aberrations and enhance overall sharpness. The autofocusing system – employing Sigma's high-thrust 'HLA' (High-Response Linear Actuator) is fast and precise while the optical stabilisation gives 5.5 stops of correction for camera shake at the 600mm focal length which also a big help when it comes to shooting hand-held. The ergonomics and balance are excellent too, so the Sigma 300-600mm really is the complete supertelephoto package – portability, flexibility, affordability and capability, topped off with a superlative image quality. If you're not there already, you'd jump into the FE or L mount systems just so you could have this lens.

CAMERA
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IMAGING AWARDS 2026
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WINNER

LUMIX

HYBRID MIRRORLESS CAMERA

SHOT WITH 177MP HIGH RESOLUTION MODE
S1RII, S PRO 50 F1.4 / 50mm, 1.6sec, F16, ISO100 ©Akihiko Nagumo

CAMERA MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
CameraHouse
WINNER

LUMIX S1RII

**Every detail.
Perfectly captured.**

2025 Winner of Hybrid Mirrorless Camera award

AI 8K 177MP 40FPS

ZOOM LENS – CROPPED FRAME

SIGMA 16-300mm f/3.5-6.7 DC OS CONTEMPORARY

CAMERA MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
SPONSORED BY CameraHouse
WINNER
16 24 35 50 70 100 180 300
16-300mm 1:3.5-6.7 DC OS ⌀67
SIGMA

The idea of one lens that can do nearly everything is very appealing, but often there are design compromises which can limit the promised versatility. But if anybody was going to get close the ideal, it would be Sigma and its 16-300mm f/3.5-6.7 DC OS Contemporary for the 'APS-C' sensor size… so it has an effective focal range of 24-450mm. Whoa! Ultra-wide to supertelephoto in the one lens? Yes, and what's more, it has pretty decent close-up capabilities and up to six stops of image stabilisation. It looks too good to be true, but it isn't and, better still, the image quality that holds up across the entire focal range is the proof.

Available in the Fujifilm X, Canon RF, Sony E and the L mounts, Sigma's 16-300mm is a comparatively compact despite its very wide 18.8x zooming range (currently the widest for 'APS-C' format mirrorless cameras). The barrel length is around 121 millimetres and it weighs a very manageable 610 grams (both these measurements vary slightly according to the lens mount). The barrel extends quite a bit when the lens is zoomed out, but it doesn't unduly upset the handling or balance. Furthermore, the scope for hand-held shooting is increased by built-in optical image stabilisation which gives up to six stops of correction for camera shake at 16mm and 4.5 stops at 300mm. The external construction is weather sealed with a water-repellent coating on the front element to help with easier cleaning.

The optical construction employs 20 elements in 14 groups which includes eight special types – four aspherical, one 'FLD' and three 'SLD' – to counter all the issues that are created by a lens that spans such a wide focal range. The optical design also helps suppress focusing 'breathing' so the image size remains the same across the focusing range which is important for video. It's a minor miracle that Sigma's engineers have still also managed to make this lens focus close enough to deliver a reproduction ratio of 1:2 – in other words, half life size – at the 70mm focal length. It's still 1:3 at the wide-angle end and 1:4 at the maximum telephoto focal length.

That so much capability and flexibility is possible with the one lens that's also surprisingly compact and lightweight – not to mention affordable – is partially a nod to what's now possible with the mirrorless camera configuration, but mostly all about the talents of Sigma's product planners and engineers. The 16-300mm is a master class in the design and manufacture of an ultrazoom and, if you have a compatible camera body, you're definitely a winner too.

PHOTO PRINTER

CANON IMAGEPROGRAF PRO-1100

CAMERA MAGAZINE AUSTRALIA
IMAGING AWARDS 2026
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Canon

It's getting harder to impress in this category as the inkjet printer technologies have long ago reached maturity and the subsequent advances are largely incremental. Yet impress the imagePROGRAF PRO-1100 most certainly does, described by our expert in this field as "An excellent printer. The best I've reviewed and well deserving of plenty of publicity".

Canon's A2 desktop flagship delivers improvements just about everywhere, including a longer print life, wider panoramas and more reliable operation. The upgraded Lucia PRO II 11-colour pigmented ink set delivers enhanced longevity and durability, the latter via much improved scratch resistance that's achieved by adding wax to the inks. Canon is claiming a light fastness that gives a print life of up to 200 years for indoor display. The reformulated pigments deliver a wider colour gamut smoother graduations along with deeper blacks and blues. The ink set additionally includes a reformulated 'Chroma Optimiser' which is a transparent coating designed to reduced bronzing and gloss differential when printing on glossy or semi-gloss papers. Particularly usefully, this can now be turned off completely – for example, when a print is going to be laminated – or set to coat the image only leaving the edges of the media with their original texture.

The PRO-1100's print head has a total of 18,432 nozzles (1536 per colour) with a minimum droplet size of four picolitres to give a resolution of 2400x1200 dpi. Canon's 'Anti Clogging' technology ensures continuously clean ink ejection. For B&W printing, the printer automatically switches between photo black and matte black inks for printing on glossy or matte surfaces. Notably, there's a dedicated 'Black & White' mode that only uses the black and grey inks to eliminate any colour casts. Among the features helping to improve reliability, the top tray has an 'Air Feeding System' which uses a vacuum to ensure the paper is held with uniform flatness while an 'Anti Skewing' function ensures that it's fed into the printer precisely aligned.

The PRO-1100 can print up to borderless A2 size on cut sheets and its accepts paper rolls which then enables panorama prints or banners up to a user-defined size of just under 3.3 metres in width (compared to 1.2 metres previously). Productivity is a key requirement of a professional-level photo printer and the PRO-1100's combination of greater efficiency, reliability, repeatability and consistency make it a winner in the studio, home office and, of course, in this year's awards.

Photo credit | Aiden Cook made the shortlist with this captivating photo in the 'Animals category' of the CH Photographer of the Year competition. | Aiden works at Croydon Camera House and shot this photo with the SONY Alpha 7C Mark II | **Lens specs** | Sony FE 50mm F1.4 GM

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RICOH
GR IV

REPORT BY **PAUL BURROWS**

GR LENS f=18.3mm 1:2.8
GR
ON/OFF

▲Spot the difference. The GR IV looks very similar to its predecessor, but quite a lot has changed both externally and internally.

SMALL FORTUNES

It all started a little over 30 year ago with a 35mm compact, but the cult status of Ricoh's ultra-slim compact cameras has really grown in the digital era, especially with the current 'APS-C' format GR series. It's going to continue with the GR IV which boasts a myriad of updates and upgrades to make it the most desirable model so far.

Camera makers would undoubtedly love to know the secret ingredient that – often miraculously – earns a particular model cult status. What is it then? Who knows, but when it happens, it's smiles all the way to the bank. For Ricoh, the GR series of compacts and its many predecessors have been the gift that keeps on giving… in fact, since 1994 and the original 35mm R1 model. It arrived when higher-end 35mm compacts were enjoy a high level of popularity and there was plenty of competition such as Nikon's more classically styled 35Ti and 28Ti, the Contax T2, the Konica Hexar and the soon-to-arrive Minolta TC-1. Ricoh defied physics with the R1's super-slim design – shallower than the diameter of a 35mm film cassette in places – and a 30mm wide-angle lens which effectively became 24mm when using the camera's panorama mode (which cropped to 12x36 mm).

Although the R1 wasn't absolutely high-end it was a big hit, convincing Ricoh to go further upmarket with the GR1 which appeared in 1997 with similar styling to the R1, but now, an all-metal body (magnesium alloy) and a 28mm f/2.8 lens and upgraded features, including film prewinding… so you didn't lose any exposed shots if the camera back was opened accidentally as they were safely back in the cassette. Incidentally, the GR1's 28mm lens was considered so good, Ricoh produced a limited run of it separately with the L39 screw mount. However, even more desirable among the 35mm GR series cameras was the GR21 (2001) with a 21mm f/3.5 ultra-wide lens. Subsequently, in 2005, the GR line sailed smoothly into the digital era with the GR Digital which retained very similar styling, but replaced film with a 1/1.8-inch CCD sensor with 8.1 megapixels resolution. The 5.9mm lens was designed to still deliver an equivalent focal length of 28mm. The GR Digital series progressed to the II (2007), the III (2009) and the IV (2011), by which time the sensor size was 1/1.7-inch the resolution was ten megapixels. In 2013, Ricoh started all over again with the GR

GR LENS f=18.3mm 1:2.8
GR

▲Bodyshell has magnesium alloy covers. Handgrip is modest in size but still provides a comfortable hold.

designation, but dropping the word "Digital" and adopting a larger 'APS-C' size sensor initially with 16.2 megapixels resolution. The GR II appeared in 2015 and the GR III in 2018 with a resolution increase to 24 megapixels, although there have also been several variants and special editions since such as the GR IIIx (2021). So now we've arrived at the GR IV – not to be confused with the GR Digital IV – which can trace its ancestry directly back a nearly three decades to the 35mm GR1.

IF IT AIN'T BROKE...

Once again, Ricoh has opted not to mess too much with what's been an enduringly successful formula. All the special ingredients are preserved – the sleek all-metal body, the 28mm-equivalent prime lens, the photography-orientated feature set and the 'real camera' control interface. The Mark IV's tweaks are mostly comparatively small, but still significant, headed by a new sensor, the latest-generation 'GR Engine 7' processor, a redesigned optical construction for the lens, new autofocus algorithms and uprated in-body image stabilisation. Did we say small changes? Well, perhaps not so small, after all.

The CMOS sensor gains a minor increase in effective resolution – up to 25.74 megapixels from 24.24 MP – which doesn't make much of a difference, but the big deal is that it's now a backside-illuminated (BSI) design. The key benefit here is more uniform sensitivity from the centre to the corners, but there's also an increase in the ISO range which now extends by a stop to 204,800. The total pixel count is 26.78 million and, for the record, this looks to be the same sensor that's used in the Pentax K3 III.

The extra megapixels bump up the maximum image size to 6192x4128 pixels at the 3:2 aspect ratio, but you're not really going to notice any real difference here from the GR III's 6000x4000 pixels. As before, JPEG capture is available at one of two compression levels and in four image sizes along with alternative aspects of 4:3, 16:9 and 1:1. RAW files are captured with 14-bit RGB colour in the Adobe DNG format, again with an image size of 6192x4128 pixels and the choice of four aspect ratios. RAW+JPEG capture is available, but as before, there's only one setting which appends a large/fine file.

Perhaps the biggest changes with the GR IV are to the data storage options with the internal memory increasing from a measly 2.0 GB to a seriously useful 53 GB. However, the memory card slot is now for the microSD format and because these devices are so tiny, they can be difficult to both insert and retrieve from the camera. The main reason for this switch is the adoption of a much bigger battery with a higher capacity – boosted by around 40 percent – to address a long-standing complaint from the users of the previous models about a comparatively short battery life. The new battery is good for around 250 shots per charge (versus 200 previous), but it's also substantially bigger physically which Ricoh has still managed to accommodate without making the Mark IV camera any bulkier than its predecessor. In fact, it's fractionally shallower in depth and the tiny five grams increase in the operational weight means you're not going to notice any difference in feel if you've been using the GR III. Most importantly, it remains pocket-friendly slim and, at 267 grams all up, hardly a handful.

The GR IV's in-body image stabilisation – which Ricoh calls "Shake Reduction" – upgrades from three-axis sensor shifting to five which, as a result, increases the correction for camera shake from four stops to six (at the centre of the frame). Obviously, this further enhances the camera's hand-held shooting capabilities, making it even more flexible in low-light situations and enhancing one of its key attractions as a fast and compact camera for street photography.

SEVEN UP

The 18.3mm f/2.8 prime lens – as noted earlier, equivalent to 28mm in the full frame format – now has a seven-element construction (in five groups) with the addition of an extra glass-moulded aspherical type. This brings the total of special elements to three and the revised optical design is aimed at enhancing corner sharpness primarily to compliment the sensor's more uniform brightness. Additionally, four of the elements are made

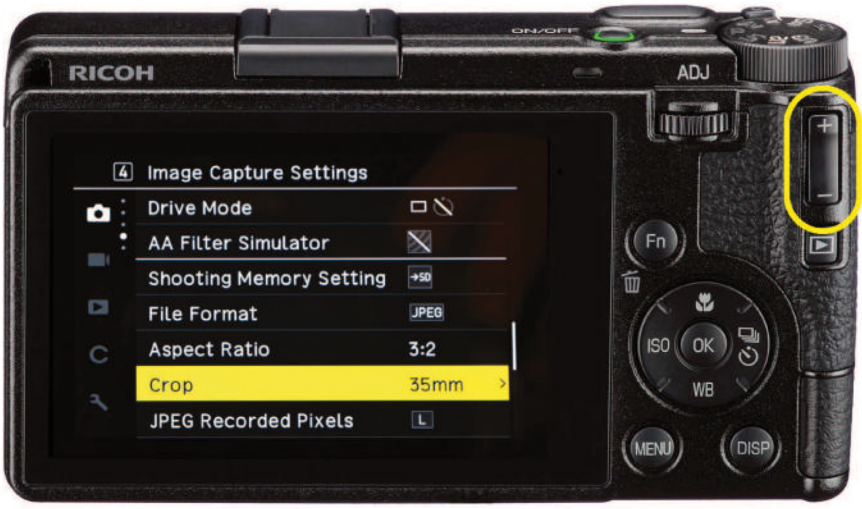
ON/OFF
M
Sn
Tv
Av
P
U1
U2
U3

▲ Main mode dial locks at its position. New 'Sn' setting is for a 'Snap Distance Priority AE' exposure mode.

GR LENS f=18.3mm 1:2.8

▲ Lens has been redesigned with a seven-element construction to enhance corner sharpness and better seal the extension/retraction movements to prevent dust being sucked in.

▲ Bigger battery with a higher capacity extends the number of shots per charge to around 250, but power shooters will likely still need to carry a spare.



4 Image Capture Settings
Drive Mode
AA Filter Simulator
Shooting Memory Setting →SD
File Format JPEG
Aspect Ratio 3:2
Crop 35mm
JPEG Recorded Pixels L

▲ Rear panel control layout is revised to adopt a multi-directional navigator keypad instead of a control wheel. Plus/minus rocker control on the thumb rest makes a welcome return from the Mark II model.

from optical glass which has low-dispersion characteristics to help minimise chromatic aberrations and help optimise sharpness.

There's also been modifications to the physical construction to make for a faster extension after the camera is switched – Ricoh claims a 25 percent increase in the camera's start-up time – and to help reduce the likelihood the dust being sucked in during the process. There's active sensor cleaning, of course, but the new imager also has an anti-static and grime-repelling coating to further assist with keeping its surface spotless.

The GR IV has two crop settings which create the equivalent of 35mm and 50mm but obviously deliver progressively small file sizes which make a difference when you've only got 25 MP on tap to start with.

However, as with the previous models, the sensor goes without a low-pass filter – also known as the anti-aliasing filter – in order to help optimise resolution and to deal with moiré patterns, there's the same 'AA Filter Simulator' function that Ricoh's employs on its higher-end Pentax DSLRs. The 'AA Filter Simulator' uses sensor-shifting and employs a very tiny sub-pixel movement to create the slight blurring – that would otherwise be done by the optical low-pass filter – to correct for moiré patterns. There are three settings – 'Off' which obviously prioritises resolution; 'Low' which balances resolution and moiré correction by shifting the sensor in a linear direction; and 'High' which oscillates the sensor in a circular motion in order to optimise the blurring effect and, as a result, the correction for moiré.

GOOD LOOKS

The GR IV now has a total of 14 'Image Control' presets with two new additions called Cinema – Yellow and Cinema – Green. As the GR IV only does video as a bit of a side-line (see the Making Movies panel), these more cinematic looks are still primarily for application to stills. There's a swag of adjustable parameters, but the list varies depending on the preset, even among the colour modes.

The major change from the GR III is that the Grain Effect processing can now be applied to the Negative Film and Positive Film options as well as the four B&W modes. Furthermore, you can now vary both the grain size and the intensity (i.e. the density). There are provisions for creating three custom 'Image Control' presets based on the 'baked-in' options with, again, a varying set of adjustable parameters depending on your starting point. The B&W toning effects are for sepia, red, green, blue and purple while the contrast filter settings are labelled 1 to 4 and increase contrast progressively.

There's a multiple exposure facility with a choice of exposure adjustments (Additive, Average or Bright) and the option to save the frames individually. An intervalometer can be set between two and 99 frames or to an unlimited frames setting. Additionally, there's an 'Interval Composite' mode which merges the sequenced images in-camera to create a single image and is handy for subjects such as the night sky.

The in-camera corrections are for dynamic range, lens vignetting (a.k.a. 'Peripheral Illumination Correction', long exposure noise reduction and high ISO noise reduction. The latter has a Custom setting which allows you to assign the Low, Medium or High reduction processing to individual ISOs from across the full native range (all of them if you wish) and also switch it off individually at any sensitivity too.

'Horizon Correction' is available too and will automatically correct for a tilt of up to 1.5 degrees when the image stabilisation is switched off, and up to one degree when it's active.

SNAP TO IT!

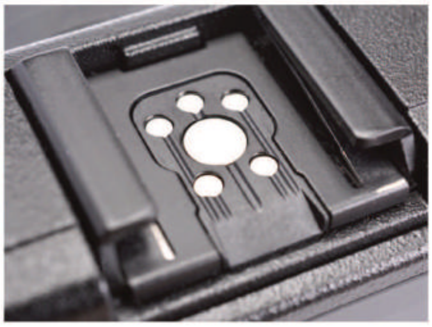
As noted at the outset, the GR IV has new autofocusing algorithms to improve the speed and precision of its hybrid phase/contrast detection system. There's a good choice of area modes, namely Auto, Zone Select, Select, Pinpoint and Tracking. Additionally, you can link the AF point/zone with the spot metering. The Auto area mode selects from a 5x5 pattern of measuring points and the Zone Select uses a moveable 3x3 points cluster. Face/eye detection for humans is also available, but there are no other subject recognition modes.

The 'Snap Focus' feature is again available and can be preset to 0.3, 1.0, 1.5,

SONY
CARD
BATT.

▲ Memory card slot is now for the fiddly microSD devices, but on the plus side the internal memory has been increased to a handy 53 GB.

▲ A proper rear input wheel – Ricoh calls them e-dials – is now provided with a press-in action for the 'ADJ' operations.



▲ As with the Mark III model, the GR IV goes without a built-in flash, but a TTL hotshoe means you get to fit one if wanted.

ON/OFF
Sn
Tv
Av
P
M
U1
U2
U3

▲ Top view illustrates just how slim the GR IV really is. GR IV is actually fractionally thinner than the previous model.

2.0, 2.5, 3.5 and 5.0 metres or infinity. With the 'Full Press Snap' option the lens rapidly focuses at the preset distance – that's the 'Snap' bit – when the shutter release is fully depressed. With normal operation, the minimum focusing distance is ten centimetres which is reduced to six centimetres in the macro mode which then ranges up to 15 centimetres. Touch focus is available via the monitor screen and allows you to move the zone or point around at will with or without subsequent autofocusing. You can also operate the 'Full Press Snap' mode from here.

The manual focus assists are a distance scale, a magnified image – adjustable between 4x and 16x – and a focus peaking display, but only in white which nonetheless works well enough.

Exposure control is based in TTL metering using 484 measuring points and with the choice of multi-zone, centred-weighted average, highlight weighted and spot measurements. There's the standard choice of 'PASM' control modes, plus new on the GR IV, 'Snap Distance Priority AE' (marked as 'Sn' on the main mode dial). This is a fully automatic exposure mode which allows you to not just set the snap focus distance, but also one of three depth-of-field settings and it then sets the required aperture to match. You can also adjust the program mode's aperture/speed line for shallow or deep depth-of-field (i.e. prioritising either wider or smaller apertures respectively). The auto exposure modes are backed by an AE lock, up to +/-5.0 EV of compensation and auto bracketing over three frames.

The lens's nine-bladed diaphragm closes to f/16 and as it also serves as the leaf shutter so, while the absolute top speed is 1/4000 second, this is only available between f/5.6 and f/16. At the wider apertures it progressively drops down to 1/2500 second at f/2.8. There's also a built-in neutral density (ND) filter which reduces the exposure by two stops. Beyond the slowest timed shutter speed setting of 30 seconds, there's the choice of both 'B' (bulb) and 'T' (time) settings for longer exposures plus a 'BT' option which is a bulb timer that can be set for up to 20 minutes. This means you only need to press the shutter button once to start the exposure and it will be ended when the set time has elapsed. It's certainly more convenient to use than the other two, but of course, you'll still need one or the other for even longer exposure durations.

The white balance controls now include two variation for automatic correction which are called Warmth Priority and White Priority and do pretty much what it says on the tin. However, Ricoh's 'Colour Temperature Enhancement' (CTE) auto mode is arguably more flexible as it boost the predominant colour in an image – rather than trying to correct for it – which is often an important element for creating mood or atmosphere. There are eight white balance presets which include four for different types of fluorescent lighting, and you can create up to three custom WB measurements and one manual setting derived from a scene's prevailing lighting (i.e. using a white card or sheet of paper). Alternatively, a specific colour temperature can be selected from a range of 2500 to 10,000 degrees Kelvin… remarkably, very finely adjustable in ten-degree increments. Fine-tuning is available for everything and over both the blue-to-amber and green-to-magenta colour ranges.

IN THE HAND

Smallness inevitably compromises operability, if only because of the size of the physical controls which can make them quite fiddly to use. Ricoh has been steadily refining the GR camera ergonomics over the various iterations and the Mark IV model has yet more tweaks… although the key one reverse the changes introduced with the Mark III. So the plus/minus rocker switch on the thumb rest – from the Mark I and II models – makes a return which is very good news because it's a very convenient way of changing settings on-the-fly. Additionally, the III's rear-panel control wheel is replaced by a multi-directional navigator keypad and the rear jog controller – which looked like a proper input wheel but wasn't – is replaced with a proper input wheel that also has a press-in function. Ricoh calls this control the "Rear e-Dial" and the press-in action is now the 'ADJ' adjust operation for quick access to a set of key functions.

Five are available this way – their icons displayed in the top right of monitor screen – selectable from a list of 17 which includes the 'Image Control' presets, ISO, capture format, aspect ratio, white balance, metering and drive modes. Selection is via the rear e-dial or the keypad and the adjustments for each – using displayed submenus – are then made with the plus/minus rocker or, if you prefer, the front e-dial. At other times, the plus/minus rocker engages exposure compensation, which is a very convenient arrangement for quick, on-the-fly adjustments. The navigator keypad's quadrants provide direct access to the white balance settings, the macro focusing mode, the drive and self-timer settings and the ISO adjustments. There just one dedicated multi-function 'Fn' button and it can be assigned a role from a list totalling 37 functions. The rest of the customisation options are more

MAKING MOVIES

This is more of a short story than anything else because, while Ricoh has done a lot to improve the GR IV as a photographic tool, very little changes as far as its video capabilities are concerned. As with the previous models, you get the impression that Ricoh has included video only because it thinks it must. You might have expected 4K by this stage, but no, Full HD is your lot 24, 30 or 50 fps with 8-bit 4:2:0 colour using the MPEG-4 AVC/H.264 codec in a .MOV container. It has built-in stereo microphones, but no provision for connecting an external mic unless you use the USB C port. There are no adjustments for the internal mics so what you get is what you get.

A little button tucked away on the side of the camera switches it to video mode and the shutter release then serves as the start/stop button. The video functionality includes most of the 'Image Control' presets, the dynamic range expansion processing, vignetting correction and the 'Snap Focus' feature. However, you don't get autofocus tracking for video nor manual adjustments for apertures and shutter speeds (the camera defaults to the program mode, no matter how the main mode dial is set). In other words, for video the GR IV is pretty much a point-and-shoot camera and little more. And… er… that's your lot.

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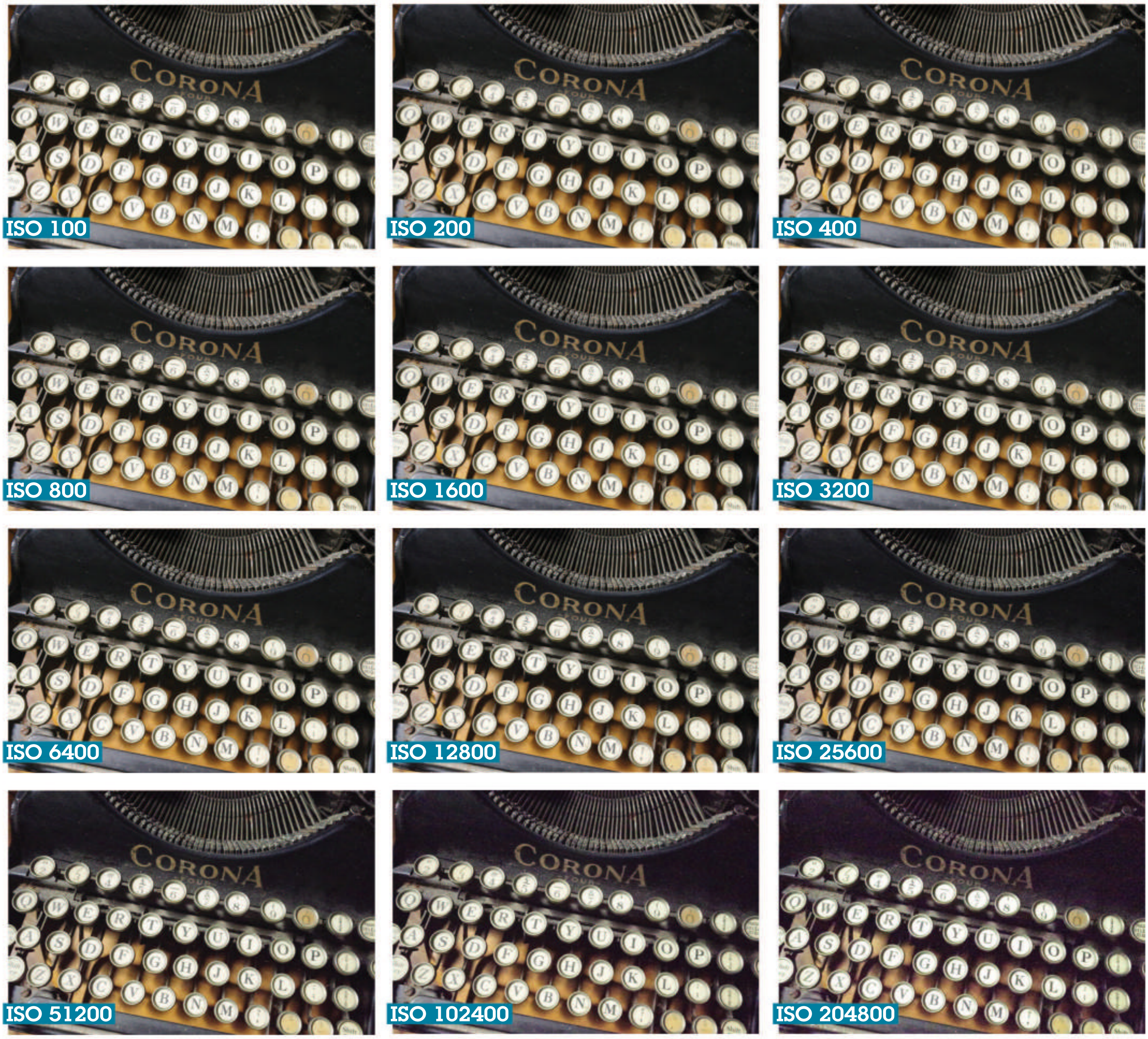

ISO 100
ISO 200
ISO 400
ISO 800
ISO 1600
ISO 3200
ISO 6400
ISO 12800
ISO 25600
ISO 51200
ISO 102400
ISO 204800

▲The GR IV's native sensitivity range spans ISO 100 to 204,800. The image quality – in terms of definition and saturation – remains little changed from ISO 100 all the way up to 6400. Some noise starts to become evident at ISO 12,800 and progressively increases up to ISO 51,200 but is not excessive.

like personalisation tweaks so, in a nutshell, the GR IV is quite straightforward to set up just how you'd like it to work. As before, the main mode dial locks at each position – the release button is particularly fiddly – and, as noted earlier, now includes a 'Sn' settings for the snap focus exposure mode plus there's three positions for storing custom camera set-ups (labelled U1 to U3).

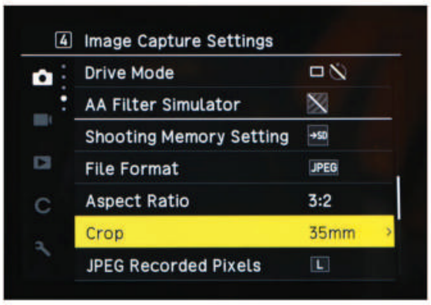
The touch screen implementation includes the previously mentioned AF operations (including 'Snap Focus'), the main menus, the 'ADJ' function tiles and submenus, and the replay modes using swipe and pinch actions. The main menu system is logically organised with five main chapters and continuous scrolling within each. Right-click navigation takes you progressively into the submenus and settings, with the keypad's 'OK' button activating your selections. As it has for quite some time, Ricoh still favours a fairly small and fine typeface – including for the on-screen read-outs – which can occasionally be a challenge to read.

◀These test images are JPEG/large/fine files taken in the aperture-priority auto exposure mode with the aperture set to f/11, so the exposure time varies to compensate for the adjustments to ISO. Both High ISO and Slow Speed Shutter noise reduction are switched off.

The live view screen can be cycled through several display configurations via a 'DISP' button and the customisable elements include a real-time histogram, either a single- or dual-axis level display, a highlight warning and a grid pattern with the choice here being 3x3 or 4x4. You can also customisation the playback display to include a histogram, a highlight warning and a guide grid.

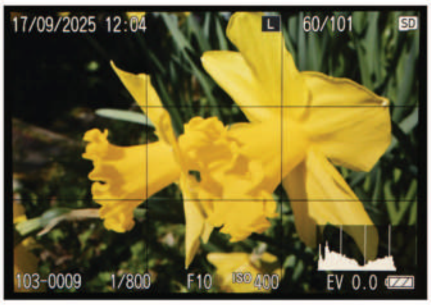
The replay/review screens include a thumbnail image along with two panels of capture data and a pair of histograms that show brightness only or a combination of brightness and the RGB channels (i.e. all on the same graph). There's the choice of 20 or 81 thumbnail pages and, in the opposite direction, zooming up to 16x.

As before, the GR IV has a swag of in-camera editing functions for JPEGs, including 'Colour Moiré Correction', 'Levels Compensation' and 'White Balance Adjustment'. Colour Moiré Correction is an option if you don't use the 'AA Filter Simulator' – or can be used even if you have – at the time of capture, and processes the image at Low, Medium or High levels to eliminate moiré artefacts (primarily by

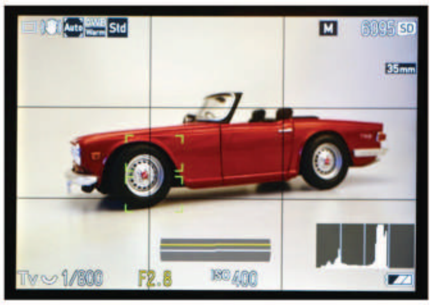


4 Image Capture Settings
Drive Mode
AA Filter Simulator
Shooting Memory Setting →SD
File Format JPEG
Aspect Ratio 3:2
Crop 35mm
JPEG Recorded Pixels L

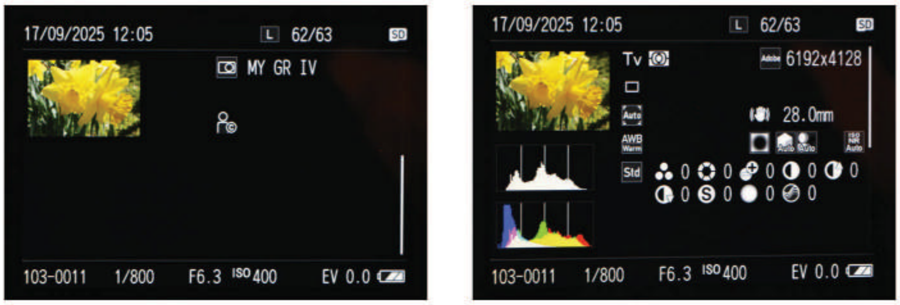
▲ Main menus still use a very fine typeface, but they're logically organised and easy to navigate.



▲ The playback display can be customised to include a histogram, a highlight warning and a guide grid.



▲ Live screen is configurable with a guide grid, level indicator (either single- or dual-axis), highlight warning and a real-time histogram.



▲ The replay/review screens include a thumbnail image along with two capture data panels and a pair of histograms that show brightness only or a combination of brightness and the RGB channels.

desaturating colour edges).

The Levels Compensation works the same way as Photoshop's Levels tool with adjustable sliders for the highlights, mid-tone and shadows which are moved along the 256 brightness levels of a histogram graph. Alternatively, an automatic correction can be applied. The white balance adjustment works in the same way as the at-capture fine-tuning. All these functions show a corrected preview alongside the original image which is very useful. Also useful is a 'Base Parameter Adjust' option which enables post-capture of the brightness, saturation, hue, contrast and sharpness. In the case of monochrome images, the adjustments are for contrast filters, the toning effects, brightness, sharpness and contrast. Unlike the at-capture options, the B&W contrast filters are now colour-related – red, blue or green plus an IR settings – and the toning effect is applied via a slider which moves from blue through to sepia.

> THE SMALL HANDGRIP DOES ITS JOB AND, OF COURSE, THERE'S VERY LITTLE WEIGHT TO DEAL WITH, SO THE GR IV IS EFFORTLESS IN PHYSICAL TERMS."

The GR IV's monitor screen remains fixed – another size-related compromise – and is the same 7.62 cm TFT LCD panel as before with a resolution of 1.037 megadots. It's adjustable for brightness, colour saturation and colour balance (over blue-to-amber and magenta-to-green). New is an 'Outdoor View Setting' feature with five presets to better match the display brightness to the ambient light level plus an auto mode.

The GR I and II models had a built-in flash which was deleted with the Mark III camera, but the GR IV is accompanied by a low-profile accessory unit called the GF-2. It's an additional purchase with a metric guide number of three at ISO 100 and, curiously, non-TTL operation although it does have an auto exposure mode. Of course, if you use on-camera flash regularly, you can always attach something bigger and better. Alternatively, you may wish to use the hotshoe for one of the optional optical viewfinders that Ricoh offers and actually work quite well for eyelevel framing and composing while you use the monitor screen for everything else.

Aside from the hotshoe, the only other interface is a USB Type C port which allows for in-camera battery recharging as well as data transfer. The wireless connectivity options are WiFi (switchable the 2.4 and 5.0 GHz bands and low-energy Bluetooth version 5.3. The newish GR World app has replaced the old Image Sync and delivers several new features including remote camera control (albeit with limited functionality at the moment), geo-tagging from your smartphone (via Bluetooth) and the ability to easily organise images into albums which can then be displayed as widgets on your device's screen.

SPEED AND PERFORMANCE

Loaded with a Sony microSDXC 64 GB UHS-I speed memory card, the Ricoh GR IV captured a burst of 23 JPEG/large/fine frames in 5.815 seconds which represents a shooting speed of 3.95 fps. This as close to the quoted 4.0 fps as really makes no difference. The test files were typically sized at 14 MB. Clearly, the GR IV is no sports camera and it's not meant to be one either so 4.0 fps will probably be fast enough for the way it will mostly be used which is one shot at a time.

Perhaps more importantly, the upgraded autofocus is decently fast and more accurate overall with better tracking when the going gets tough. The Auto area mode provides good frame coverage and is definitely the go-to option for general shooting, but if you need more precision with the selected points, the host of smaller area modes have got you covered. The face/eye detection also works well and stays on the subject as long as the interruptions are short.

The out-of-camera best-quality JPEGs exhibit crisp detailing with smooth tonal gradations and a wide dynamic range which, notably, benefits detailing in the brighter highlights. There is, of course, a vast array of tweaking options for colour and more via the expanded choice of 'Image Control' presets with their big choices of adjustable parameters. With RAW capture, the wider dynamic range gives plenty of exposure latitude – at least four stops – so there's plenty of scope for brightening the shadow areas post-camera without creating much noise.

The image quality – in terms of definition and saturation – remains little changed from ISO 100 all the way up to 6400. Some noise starts to become evident at ISO 12,800 and progressively increases up to ISO 51,200, but the level of detailing isn't unduly diminished and so any of these settings are still useable without unduly sacrificing the IQ.

In reality, it's possible to get away with shooting at ISO 102,400, although with JPEGs the finer details are lost to the noise reduction processing softening. At ISO 204,800 both chroma or colour noise are markedly increased, reducing the colour saturation and further reducing the definition which limits the enlargement possibilities for printing, but if you've got no other option, it's useable. Overall, then, the GR IV is an excellent performer in low light situations – especially for an 'APS-C' format camera – and this further enhances its street photography cred.

THE VERDICT

It's a challenge to make a camera as compact as the Ricoh GR IV and not create some compromises to the ergonomics and operation in the process. By reverting to some of control elements of the Mark I and II models along with some fresh revisions for the Mark IV version, it's surprisingly intuitive and logical to use. There's still a few control sequences that will be unfamiliar if you've only ever used a mirrorless ILC or a DSLR before, but they're easily learnt and then the Ricoh is both fast and efficient no matter what you want it to do. And while its specs are run-of-the-mill, the monitor screen is surprisingly good even in bright sunlight. The handling is as you'd expect for a camera of this size, but the small handgrip does its job and, of course, there's very little weight to deal with, so the GR IV is effortless in physical terms.

And, boy, it is small! In fact, the smallest 'APS-C' format camera you can have, but there's still all the IQ advantages of this sensor size, further enhanced by the new BSI design. Consequently, the imaging performance is brilliant – even at the higher ISO settings – and achieving results that are this good from a camera that's this small remains at the heart of the GR series appeal. There's no question that the Mark IV is better than anything that has gone before – and markedly better in quite a few areas than any of the Mark III models – so the legend will most assuredly continue. But don't buy this camera because it's trendy, buy it because it's brilliant.

VITAL STATISTICS

RICOH GR IV $2,199 recommended retail price

Type: Enthusiast-level, fixed-lens digital compact camera.

Lens: Ricoh GR 18.3mm f/2.8 (equivalent to 28mm). Seven elements in five groups, including three glass-moulded aspherical types. Built-in EV 2.0 neutral density (ND) filter.

Focusing Type & Range: Hybrid phase/contrast detection using nine focusing points with single-shot or continuous operation. Range is 10 cm to infinity: macro focusing down to 6.0 cm. Snap focus and 'Full Press Snap' (0.3, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.5, 5.0 metres and infinity). Auto, Zone Select, Select, Pinpoint and Tracking area modes. Face/eye detection. Focus limiter (Near Side, Far Side, off). Low light assist via built-in illuminator. Manual focusing assisted by a distance scale, magnified image (4x, 8x or 16x) and focus peaking display. Sensitivity range is EV -1.0 to 18 (ISO 100).

Shutter Type & Speeds: Electronically controlled leaf, 30-1/4000 second plus 'B' and 'T' (30-1/2500 second between f/2.8 and f/5.6). The lens aperture range is f/2.8 to f/16. Built-in neutral density filter is equivalent to two stops. Flash sync up to 1/2000 second. Maximum shutter speed at f5.6 or smaller is 1/4000 second.

Metering: Multi-zone (using 484 measuring points), centre-weighted average, highlight-weighted average and spot.

Exposure Control: Program (with shift), shutter-priority auto, aperture-priority auto, 'Snap Distance' priority and manual. Up to +/-5.0 EV compensation in 1/3 EV increments with 'Auto EV Compensation', and auto exposure bracketing (three frames at up to +/-5.0 EV).

Sensitivity: ISO 100 – 204,800.

Sensor: 23.3x15.5 mm BSI CMOS, 25.74 megapixels (effective). No optical low-pass filter.

Formats/Resolution: JPEG capture at one of two compression levels. RAW capture at 14-bits RGB colour (Adobe DNG). RAW+JPEG capture available.

- Four resolution setting at 3:2 aspect ratio; 6192x4128, 4944x3296, 3504x2336 and 1920x1280 pixels.
- Four resolution settings at 4:3 aspect ratio; 5504x4128, 4400x3296, 3120x2336 and 1920x1440 pixels.
- Four resolution settings at 16:9 aspect ratio; 6192x3480, 4944x2784, 3504x1968 and 1920x1080 pixels.
- Four resolution settings at 1:1 aspect ratio – 4128x4128, 3296x3296, 2336x2336 and 1280x1280 pixels.

Video Recording: MOV format with 8-bit 4:2:0 colour (MPEG-4 AVC/H.264 codec) at 1920x1080 pixels (Full HD), 60, 30 or 24 fps and 16:9 aspect ratio. Built-in stereo microphones.

Continuous Shooting: Up to 4.0 fps for a burst of 18 JPEG/large/fine frames or four RAW files.

Flash: No built-in flash. External flash units sync via a hotshoe.

White Balance: TTL measurement via image sensor. Three auto correction modes (Auto, Warmth Priority, White Priority), CTE – Colour Temperature Emphasis – auto, eight lighting presets, one manual WB measurement, three custom presets, fine tuning (blue-to-amber and green-to-magenta), auto bracketing (three frames) and manual colour temperature setting (2500 to 10,000 degrees Kelvin).

Viewfinder: Fixed 7.62 cm TFT LCD monitor panel with 1.037 megadots resolution and touch screen controls. Adjustable for brightness, colour saturation and colour balance (blue-to-amber, magenta-to-green). 'Outdoor View Setting' mode. Optional optical eyelevel viewfinders available.

Storage: microSD/SDHC/SDXC card with UHS-I speed support plus 53 GB of internal memory.

Interface: USB 3.1 Type C.

Additional Features: Magnesium alloy bodyshell, 'AA Filter Simulator' (High. Low, Off), in-body image stabilisation via sensor shift with five-axis movements and up to 6.0 stops of correction for camera shake (frame centre), sensor cleaning, Adobe RGB and sRGB colour spaces, 14 'Image Control' presets (Standard, Vivid, Monotone, Soft Monotone, Hard Monotone, High Contrast B&W, Negative Film, Positive Film, Cinema – Yellow), Cinema – Green, Bleach Bypass, Retro, Cross Processing, HDR Tone), three custom 'Image Control' presets, adjustable 'Image Control' parameters (Saturation, Hue, High/Low Key Adjustment, Contrast, Contrast – Highlight, Contrast – Shadow, Sharpness, Shading, Clarity, B&W Toning, B&W Filter Effects, Grain Effect, HDR Tone Level, Colour Tone), 'Dynamic Range Correction' processing (Highlight/Shadow), crop mode (35mm or 50mm equivalent focal lengths), intervalometer (two to 99 frames, or unlimited), 'Interval Composite' mode, multiple exposure facility (with Additive, Average or Bright exposure adjustment), 'Horizon Correction' (up to 1.5 degrees with image stabilisation switched off, +/-1.0 degrees otherwise), vignetting correction ('Peripheral Illumination' correction), single/dual-axis level indicator, depth-of-field preview, real-time histogram, high ISO noise reduction (Auto, Low, Medium, High, Auto, Custom [i.e. individually adjustable for specific ISO settings], Off), long exposure noise reduction (Auto, On, Off), dual delay self-timer (two or 10 seconds), grid guides (choice of two), highlight warning, adjustable image display time, 'Base Parameter Adjustment' in-camera corrections (Brightness, Saturation, Filter Effect, Hue, Toning, Contrast, Sharpness), in-camera RAW-to-JPEG conversion (nine parameters), in-camera editing functions (Delete, Protect, Image Rotation, Image Copy, File Transfer, Resize, Cropping [aspect ratio and slant adjustment], Levels Adjustment, White Balance Adjustment, Colour Moiré Correction, Movie Edit-Cut), Movie Edit-Divide, Save Movie Frame As Image), 20/48 thumbnail displays, zoom playback (up to 16x), slide show, copyright information, audible signals, WiFi (2.4 and 5.0 GHz bands) and Bluetooth LE 5.3 wireless connectivity. Optional wide-angle conversion lens available (21mm equivalent).

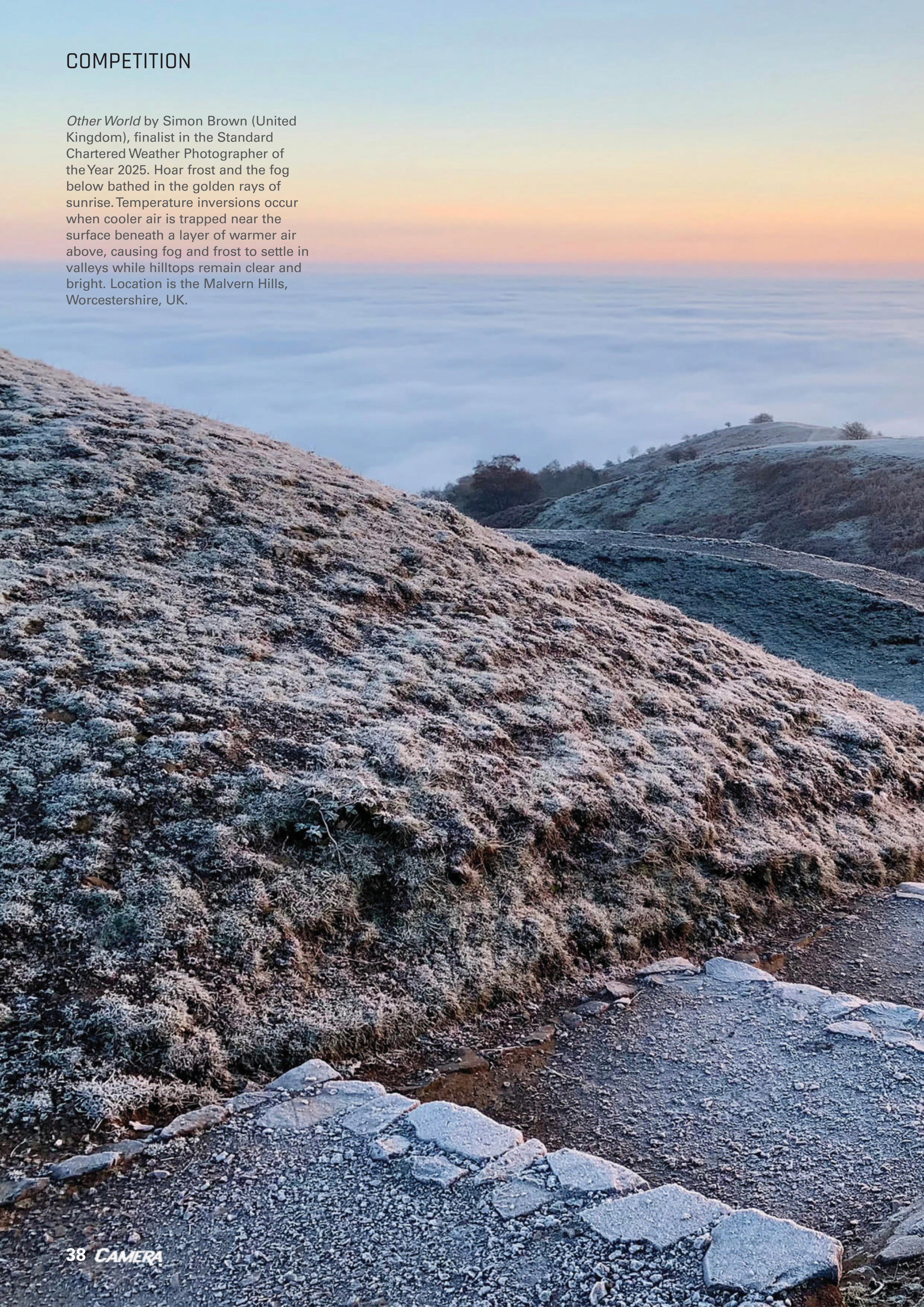
Power: Rechargeable 3.85 volts, 1800 mAh lithium-ion battery pack (DB-120 type). In-camera battery recharging via USB C.

Dimensions (WxHxD): 109.4x61.1x33.7 mm.

Weight: 262 grams (including battery and memory card).

Price: $2199. Available in black only.

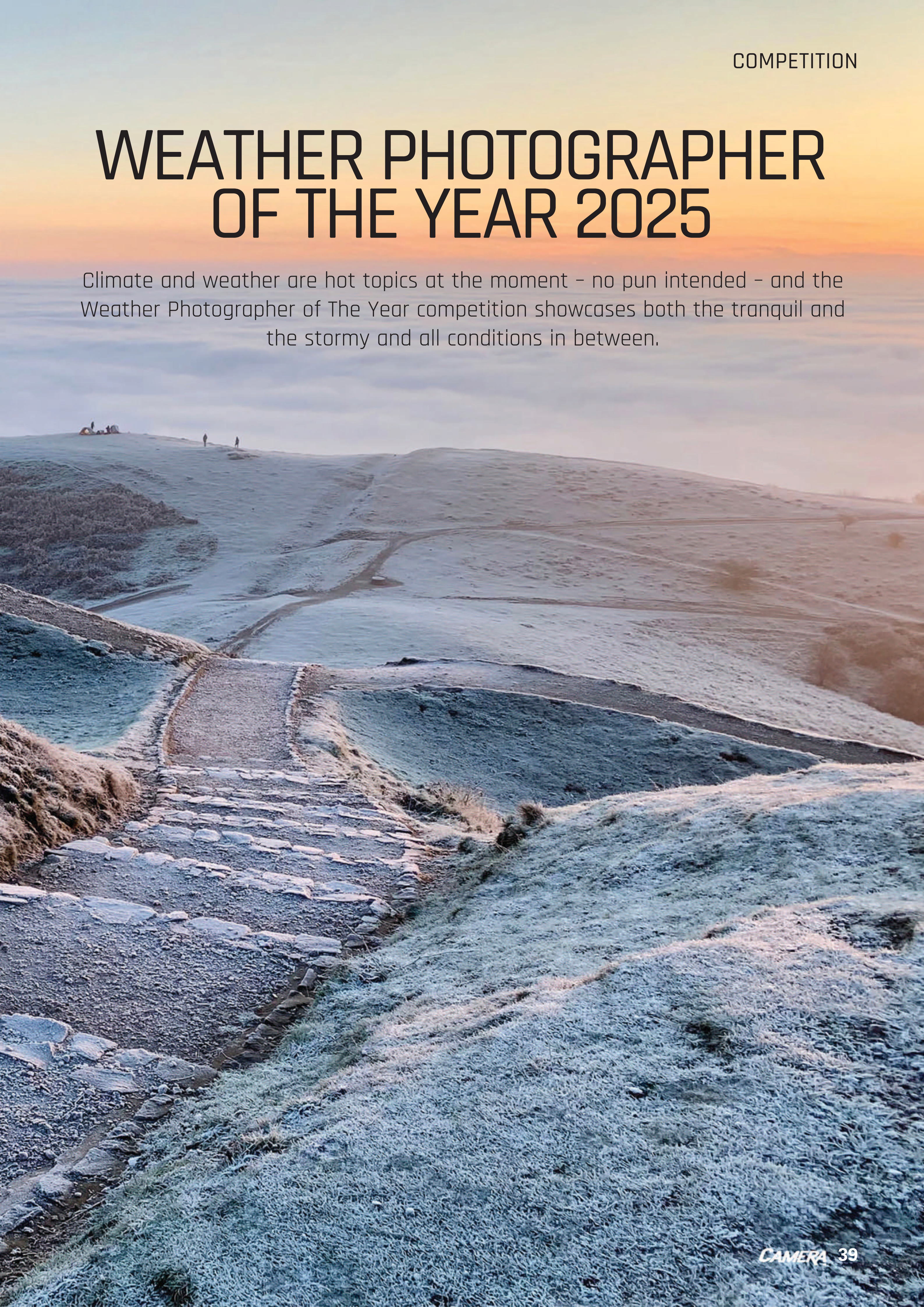
Distributor: C.R. Kennedy Photo Imaging Pty Ltd, visit https://pentax.com.au



Other World by Simon Brown (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Hoar frost and the fog below bathed in the golden rays of sunrise. Temperature inversions occur when cooler air is trapped near the surface beneath a layer of warmer air above, causing fog and frost to settle in valleys while hilltops remain clear and bright. Location is the Malvern Hills, Worcestershire, UK.

WEATHER PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2025

Climate and weather are hot topics at the moment – no pun intended – and the Weather Photographer of The Year competition showcases both the tranquil and the stormy and all conditions in between.



Celebrating its tenth year, the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of The Year competition is run by the United Kingdom's Royal Meteorological Society and serves as an international platform to raise awareness of environmental issues that are putting our planet at risk – including heatwaves, extreme flooding and cyclones – while showcasing the awe-inspiring beauty and power of weather.

The expert panel of judges – which included photographers, meteorologists, scientists, broadcasters and journalists – whittled down over 4000 entries from 12 countries around the world to just 25 finalists with the overall winner being selected by a public vote held online at the Royal Meteorological Society's website.

To mark the competition's tenth birthday, photographs taken over the last ten years were accepted for entry.

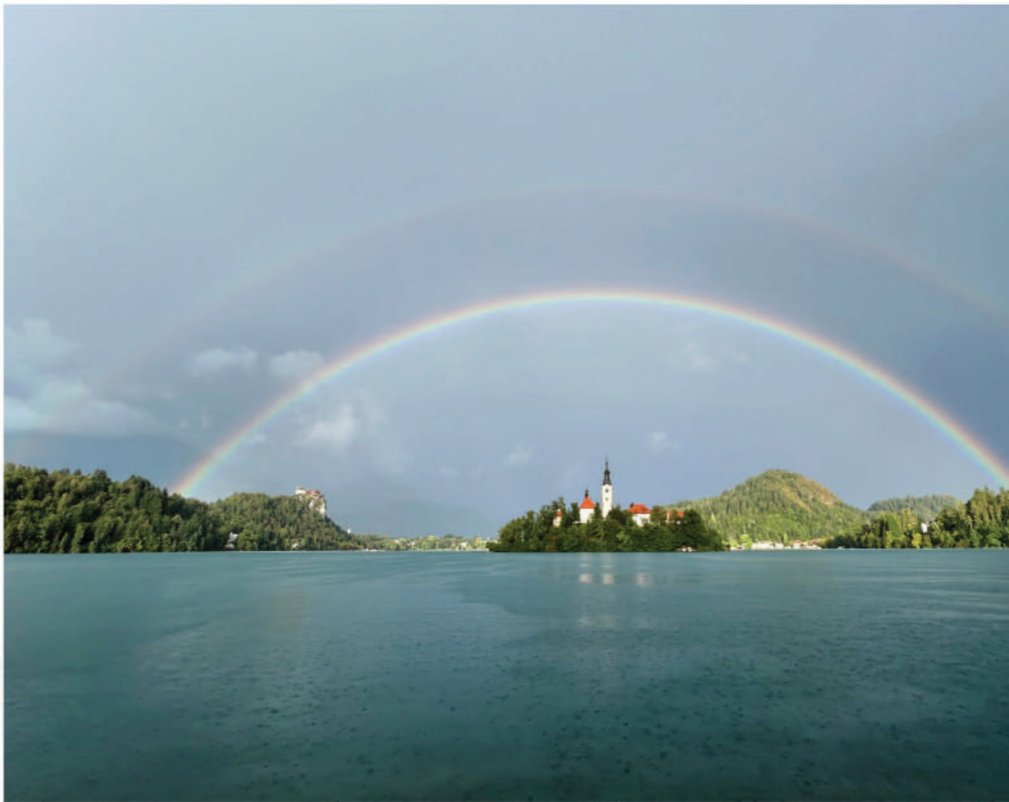
Professional cameras, smartphones and drones have captured this year's shortlisted photographs. Highlights include stunning cloud formations, the effects of storms – from the north of the UK to the southern USA, summer scenes and winter frosts, skies being painted by nature's colours in the form of rainbows and the *Aurora Borealis*, as well as showcasing the results of climate change resulting in more unstable and intense weather.

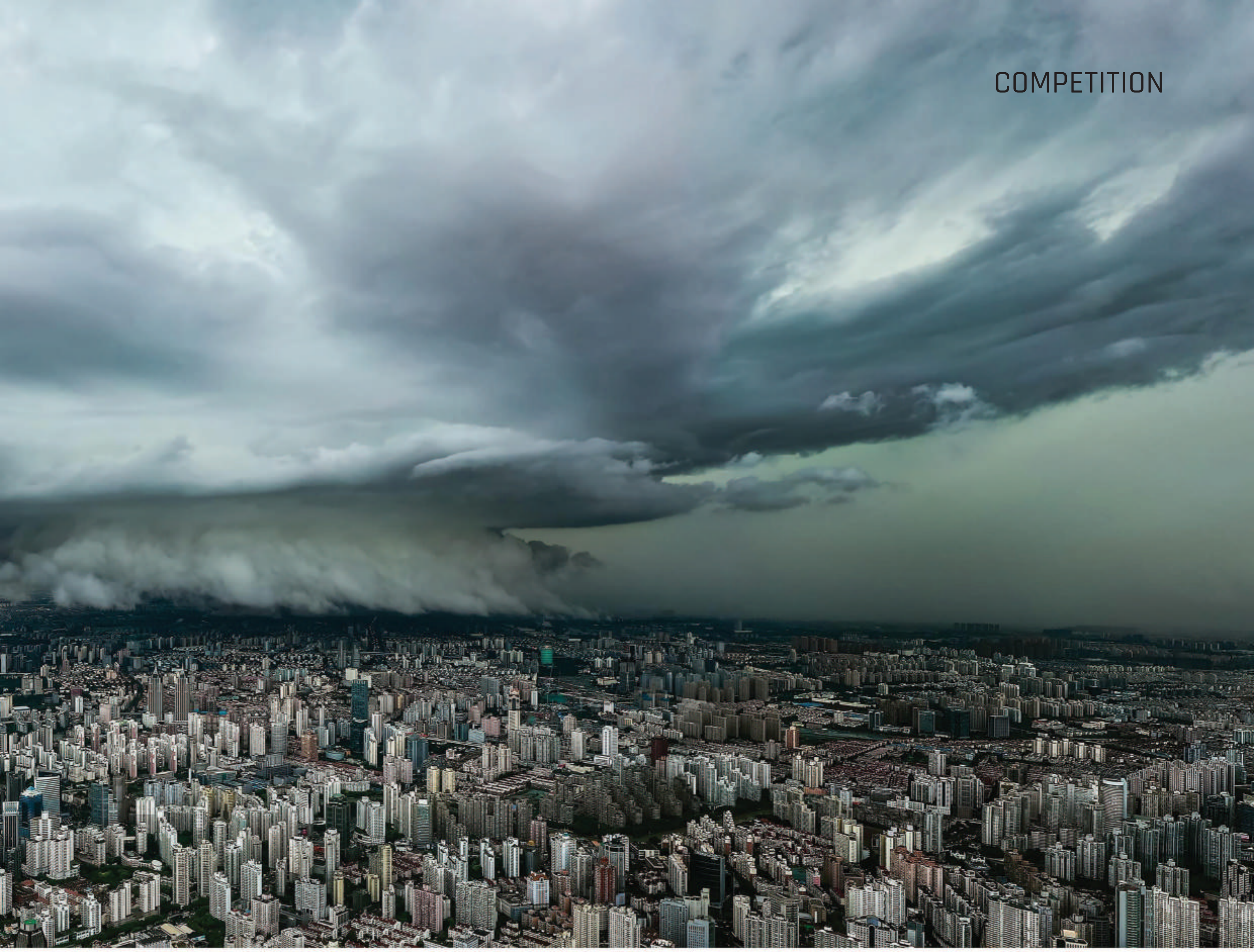
Professor Liz Bentley – who is the Chief Executive of the Royal Meteorological Society – commented, "Over the last ten years the Royal Meteorological Society has been inviting global photographers, from experienced professionals to amateurs with a mobile phone, to capture the weather and climate through their lenses. It's incredible to see the way entrants have documented the beauty of our weather, as well as highlighting the significant impacts of climate change, and increasingly, the effects it has on the weather – including more extreme weather events. A huge congratulations to those shortlisted and on behalf of the judges, I'd like to thank everyone who contributed to the competition which aims to share a global story of our weather and climate – each image inspires and brings vital stories to the fore."

The Royal Meteorological Society joined forces with Standard Chartered to increase the global reach and profile of the competition and to tell the climate story that sits behind every photograph submitted.

The overall winning image will be announced on 30 October. For more information visit **https://www.rmets.org/weather-photographer-of-the-year/competition**

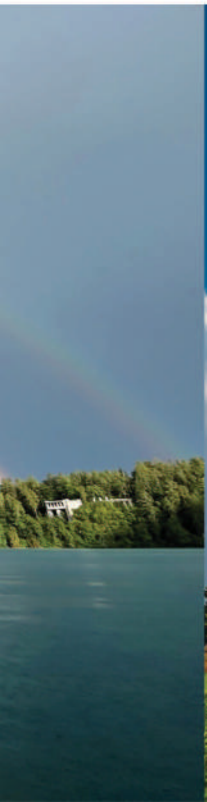
Rainbow Gateway To Bled by Eloise Matthews (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. In the foreground, the lake's surface is speckled by falling raindrops while, in the distance, the island's church tower sits perfectly framed by a rainbow's arc. The location is Lake Bled, Slovenia.

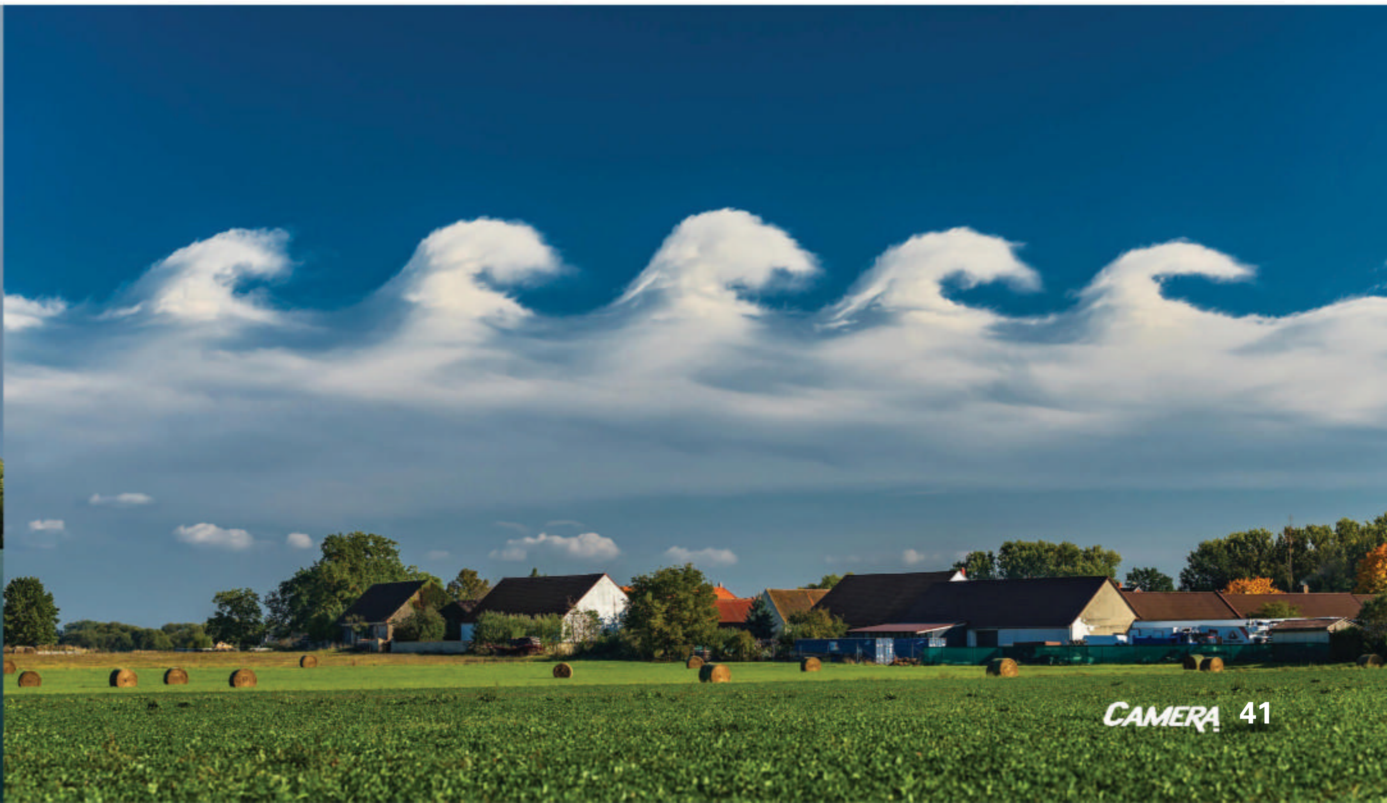




Sky Surfing by Lukáš Gallo (Czech Republic), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. The rare Kelvin-Helmholtz wave clouds are formed when there's a sharp difference in wind speed or direction between two layers of air, similar to the way wind can whip up waves on the surface of the sea. The location is the South Bohemia region, Czechia.

Supercell Storm Over the City by He Wei (Chin), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Supercell storms are the strongest and most severe type of thunderstorms, defined by a deep rotating updraught known as a mesocyclone, and can produce damaging winds, large hail and even powerful tornadoes. The location is Shanghai, China.

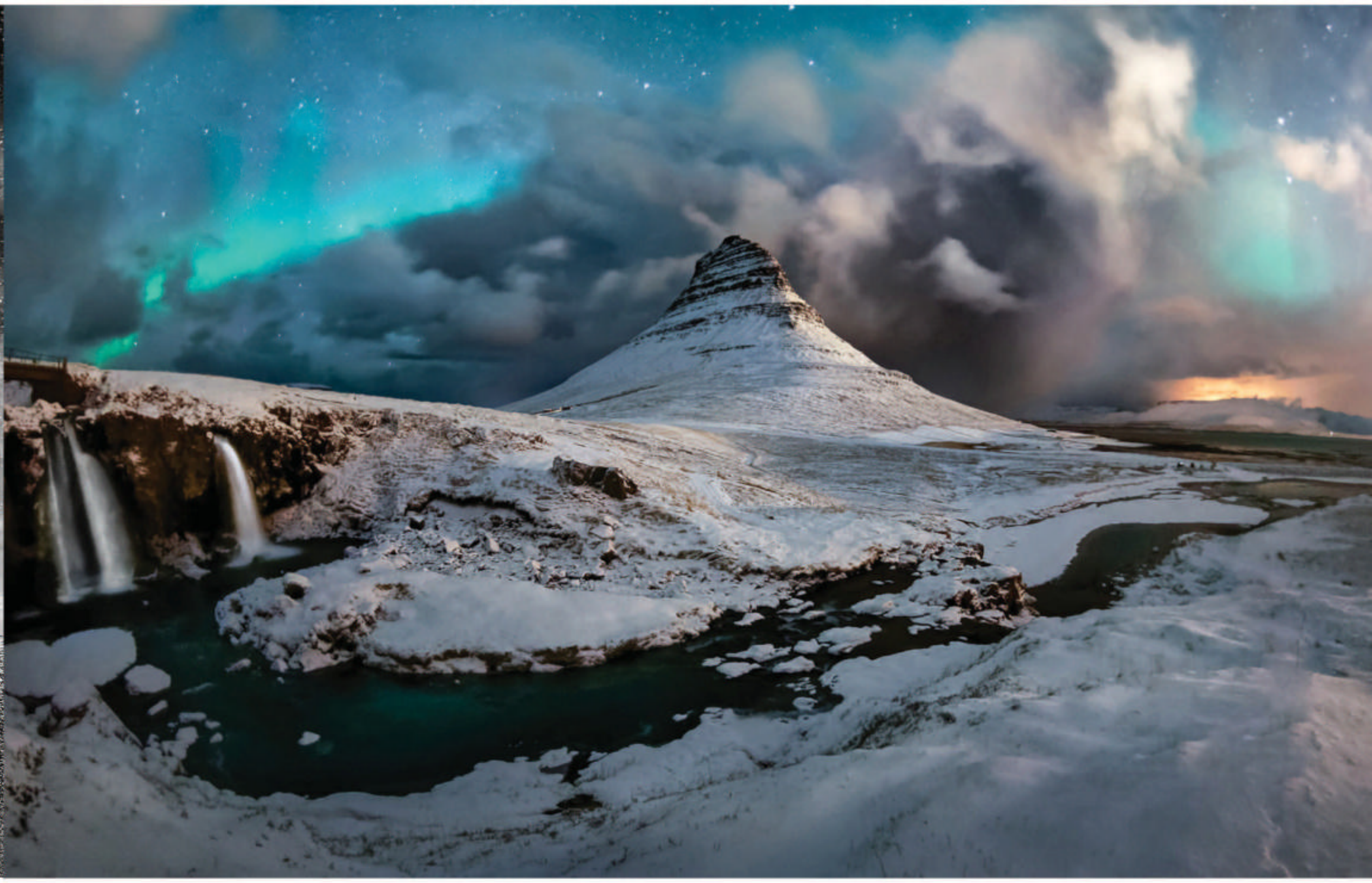




Solitude in the Embrace of Inversion by Dominika Koszowska (Poland) finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. A solitary tree coated in crisp white hoarfrost, which forms when water vapour in the air meets an object that's temperature is below freezing. A temperature inversion is visible here as well – a meteorological phenomenon where a layer of warmer air sits above colder air near the ground, trapping it below. The location is Lapszanka, Poland.

Volcanic Majesty by Aung Chan Thar (Myanmar), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. In Indonesia's Bromo Tengger Semeru National Park, the iconic peaks of Mount Bromo and Mount Semeru rise dramatically above a swirling sea of mist and layered clouds.

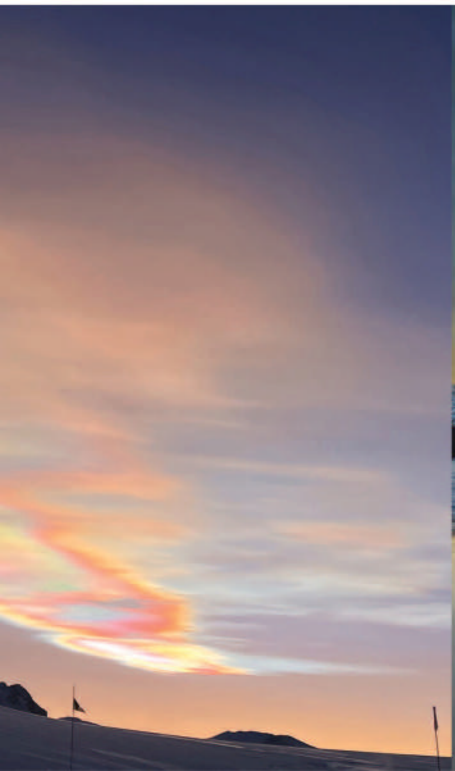
Puddle Fun by Adam D'Auria (Germany), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. In Düsseldorf, Germany, the streets were still slick from heavy rain creating the perfect puddles for reflections. This image is inverted so the reflection fills the top of the frame, while the boy's real feet anchor the bottom. Cumulus clouds ripple across the puddle's surface, disturbed by the frozen explosion of water from the jump.

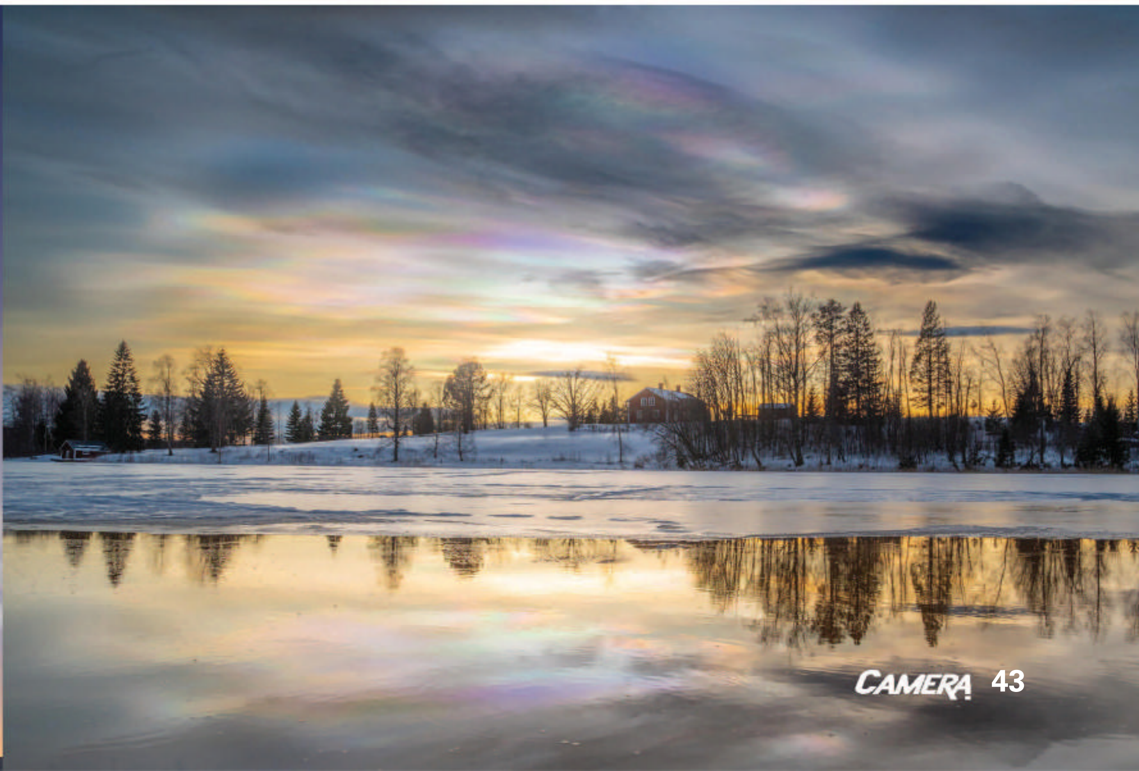


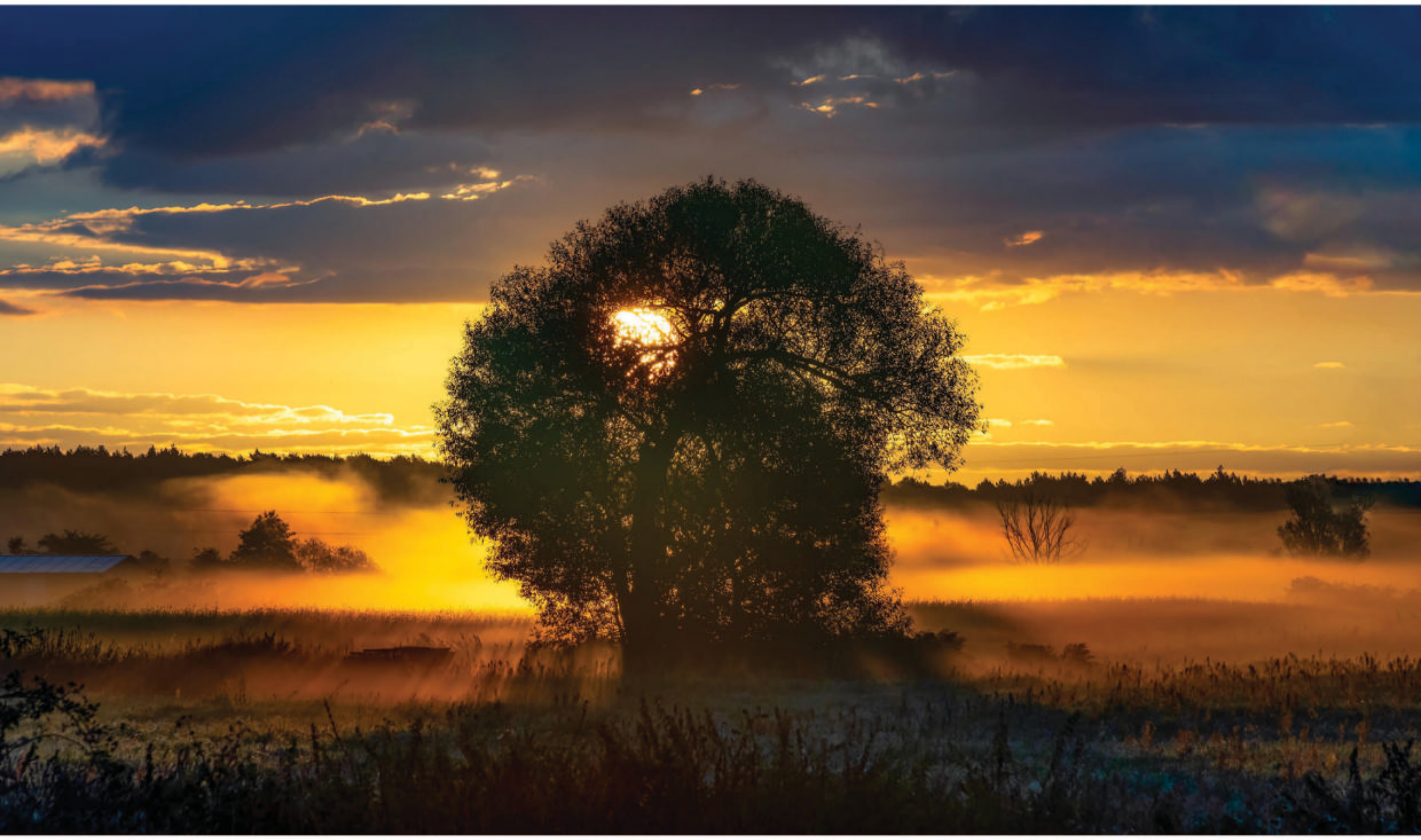
The Birth of a New Universe by Yevhen Samuchenko (Ukraine), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Beneath Iceland's iconic Kirkjufell mountain, the Kirkjufellsfoss waterfall surges through snow and rock while, above, the sharp peak of Kirkjufell is framed by soft cumulus and altocumulus clouds.

Iridescent Skies Over Rothera Research Station by Victor Cirstet (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Nacreous clouds form in the lower stratosphere, typically between 15 and 20 kilometres above the Earth, where temperatures can drop below -78 degrees Celsius. At these extreme altitudes and cold conditions, water vapour deposits directly into tiny ice crystals. The Rothera Research Station is in Antarctica.

Reflections Of Pearls by Matt Stuttard Parker (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. In northern Sweden, the elusive beauty of nacreous clouds – also known as polar stratospheric clouds or mother-of-pearl clouds – reflected in a patch of melted ice on a frozen sea.

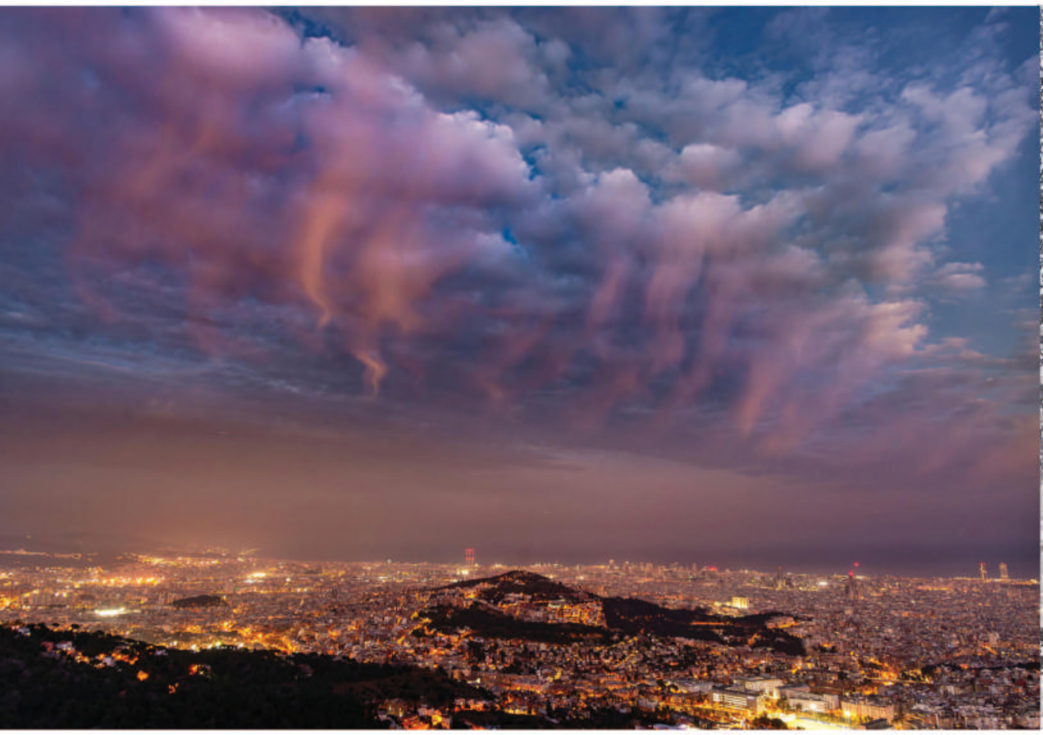






↑ *Drzewo Słońca na Polu Snów* by Krzysztof Tollas (Poland), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. The title translates as The Sun Tree in the Field of Dreams. As the sun rises over the Gwda River in Poland, a golden glow spills across the mist-covered fields. The golden colour of the light arises from Rayleigh scattering.

Jellyfish Invasion in the Sky by Alfons Puertas (Spain), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Captured shortly after sunset during twilight, a stunning display of altocumulus stratiformis virga clouds is spreading across the sky like a swarm of jellyfish. The location is the Fabra Observatory in Barcelona, Spain. ↓



↑ *Eunice III* by Jadwiga Piasecka (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Storm Eunice brought England's highest recorded wind gust of 122 miles per hour. It was one of several intense European windstorms in early 2022. The location is Newhaven Lighthouse, United Kingdom.

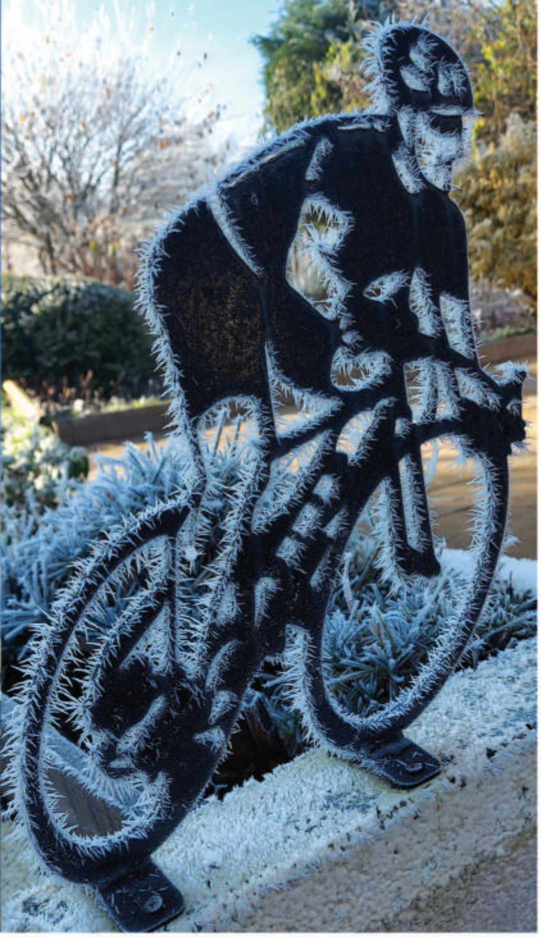
↓ *Spray* by Shaun Mills (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. During a storm on Britain's east coast, waves crash against the sea defences at Overstrand in Norfolk, UK, sending sea spray high into the air.

↓ *The Gorgeous Ring* by Geshuang Chen (China), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Rainbows are a familiar sight, but full-circle rainbows are much less common. From the ground, the lower half of the circle is usually hidden below the horizon. From high above with the sun behind and rainfall ahead, it's possible to see the entire circle. The location is Lugu Lake, Yunnan Province, China.

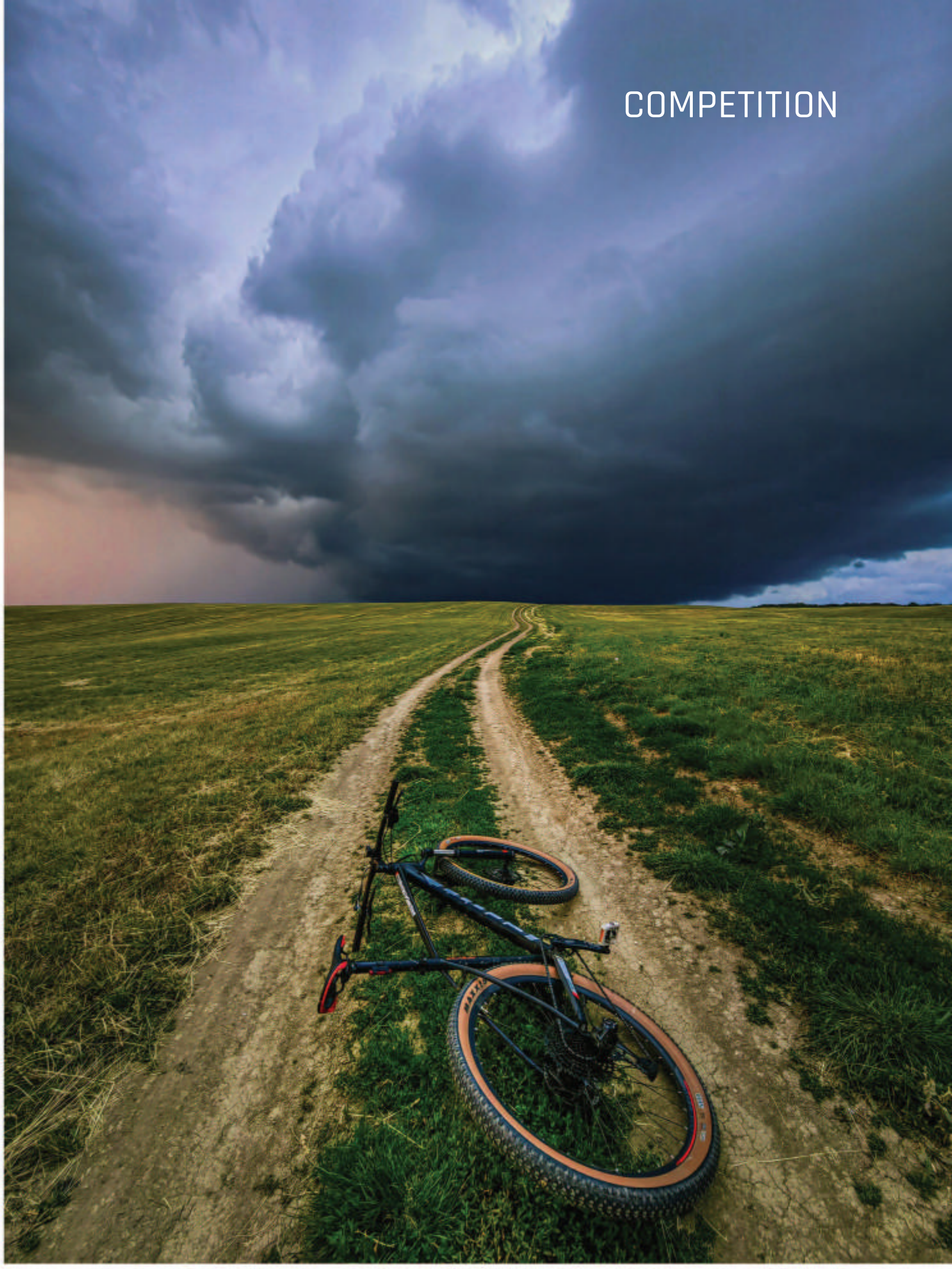
↑ Lenticular Invasion by Victor Cirstet (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Captured on the icy coast of Adelaide Island, the image shows altocumulus lenticularis clouds drifting westward from the Antarctic Peninsula. The location is the Rothera Research Station, Adelaide Island, Antarctica.

Fishing In Raining Season by Kyaw Zay Yar Lin (Myanmar), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Myanmar's monsoon climate brings heavy seasonal rains, and fishing remains a vital livelihood even during storms like this. The location is Inle Lake, Myanmar. ↓

Golden Canvas by Aung Chan Thar (Myanmar), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. A golden sunrise over Myanmar's Inle Lake. In the centre of the lake, three small fishing boats drift together, sending out concentric ripples that gently disturb the glassy surface. ↓

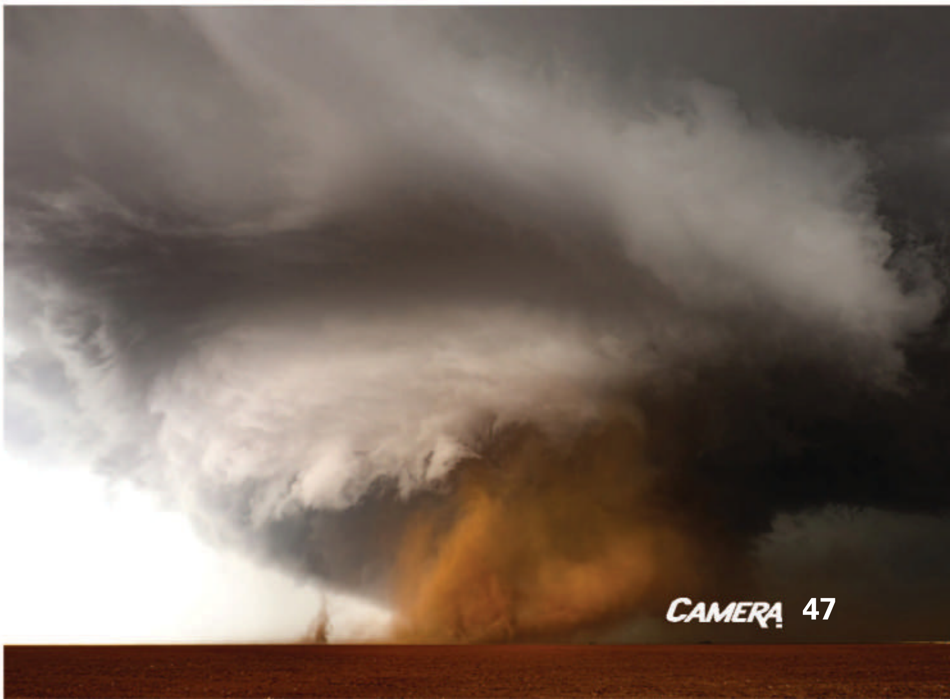


↑ The Cyc-hoar-list by Chris Lehrbach (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Prickly hoar crystals have formed on every surface of a laser-cut steel representation of a cyclist. Hoar frost forms when water vapour in the air deposits directly as ice on surfaces that are below freezing. The location is Bedingham in Norfolk, UK.



↑ Path To The Heart Of The Storm by Tamás Kusza (Slovakia), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. A dirt track cuts through the countryside in Ožďany, Slovakia, drawing the eye towards a sky heavy with dark, swirling clouds. In the middle of the path, a mountain bike lies still, its rider momentarily grounded by the sight ahead.

↓ West Texas Special by Jonah Lange (USA), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. A spiralling column of dust and wind dominates the Texas Plains. The location is Sudan, Texas, USA.



↑ *Winnats Pass Inversion* by Andy Gray (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. Dramatic temperature inversions are a regular sight in the Hope Valley area of the UK's Peak District.

↓ Trolley Park by Ian Knight (United Kingdom), finalist in the Standard Chartered Weather Photographer of the Year 2025. In a flooded supermarket car park in Stafford, England, the calm water reflect a shopping trolley shelter and its contents.

HASSELBLAD

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REPORT BY **PAUL BURROWS**

OM SYSTEM
M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 50-200mm f/2.8 IS PRO

GREAT (FOR THE) OUTDOORS

The equivalent of a 100-400mm focal range with a constant aperture of f/2.8, image stabilisation, useful close-up focusing and a pro-grade construction both inside and out. OM System's 50-200mm telezoom is another convincing argument for the M43 sensor size, balancing easy handling with a big performance.

In keeping with the OM Digital Solution's positioning of the OM System brand as the camera gear for the great outdoors, the 50-200mm f/2.8 is another telezoom in the lens line-up that promotes the enhanced portability that's made possible by the Micro Four Thirds sensor size. It joins the stonking 150-600mm and the upgraded 100-400mm in leveraging the near-doubling, in effect, of the focal length while maintaining significantly more compact dimensions and a lighter weight. It's a very desirable combination if you're spending a lot of time carrying your equipment around which is often the case when shooting wildlife, birds, adventure or sports.

Unlike these other two models, however, the new 50-200mm is a PRO line model which means a step up in both the optical and physical constructions to enhance performance and ruggedness. With its effective focal range of 100-400mm, the 50-200mm slots in between the 150-400mm f/4.5 (300-800mm equivalent) and the 40-150mm f/2.8 (80-300mm) PRO models. Being longer than the latter, but arguably less specialised than the former (and certainly a lot more compact), the 50-200mm will definitely tick a few boxes for M43 shooters especially as it combines the 100-400mm focal range with a constant aperture of f/2.8 which isn't on offer in any other mirrorless system in any other sensor format. The constant aperture is, of course, a feature of the PRO zooms along with internal focusing and, in the case of the 50-200mm, internal zooming as well. Keeping these adjustments inside the lens involves a fairly complex mechanism, but it greatly benefits the handling and the balance as the barrel length always remains constant. Additionally, the integrity of the

> IT'S A QUITE COMPLEX LENS IN DESIGN TERMS WHICH DELIVERS A NUMBER OF BENEFITS IN TERMS OF BOTH PERFORMANCE AND OPERATION.”

protection against the intrusion of moisture or dust is superior as there aren't any barrel tubes telescoping in and out with the risk of actually sucking tiny particles inside. Consequently, the 50-200mm's weather sealing is to the higher IP53 rating, matching that of the OM-1, OM-1 II, OM-3 and OM-5 II camera bodies. This also includes insulation where needed to allow for reliable operation in subzero temperatures down to -10 degrees Celsius. At the other end of the temperature scale, the 50-200mm has the more reflective white finish – only the second OM System model to adopt it after the 150-400mm – to help prevent too much heat building up internally which can then affect the precision of some operations.

Having a faster constant aperture also has an advantage when using a teleconverter so, with the M.Zuiko Digital MC-40 1.4x unit fitted, the 50-200mm becomes a 70-280mm f/4.0 telezoom which is still comparatively fast given the effective focal range is 140-560mm. The 2.0x MC-20 converter gives 100-400mm – which is effectively 200-800mm – at f/5.6 so there's still flexibility when it comes the shutter speeds and sensitivity settings particularly if you're shooting in lower light conditions.

The point to be made here is that while the 50-200mm PRO is significantly more expensive than the 40-150mm PRO – beyond just the difference in their focal ranges – it's a much more complex lens in design terms which delivers a number of benefits in terms of both performance and operation. Incidentally, only the 150-400mm is more expensive in the current OM System lens line-up, but if you've got the budget, this lens and the 50-200mm would complement each other very nicely in the field.

OPTICAL DESIGN

The 50-200mm's design complexity is very much on show with its optical construction which employs 21 elements in 13 groups, but this includes a total of nine special types. Here there's an alphabet soup of names to describe what these nine elements do – two are ‘Super ED’ types (which is short for ‘Super Extra-Low Dispersion’), two are HR types (‘High Refractive Index’), one has ED glass (‘Extra-Low Dispersion’) type, one is an aspherical element made from ED glass – designated ‘EDA’ (‘Extra-Low Dispersion Aspherical’) and which is also a large-diameter type, and three are ‘E-HR’ types (which stands for ‘Extra-High Refractive Index’).

So what does it all mean? The ED and HR elements are made from glass formulations – it's a very precise science – that's designed to more precisely control how the different coloured wavelengths of light pass through them – remembering that refraction or bending takes place as the rays both enter and leave an element. The objective is to minimise the difference in the degree that the different colours refract – i.e. the amount of dispersion – so they all focus at the same point. This limits both lateral (also known as transverse) and longitudinal (or axial) chromatic aberrations – which manifests itself as colour fringing along high-contrast edges – and also corrects for spherical aberrations. Not surprisingly, this fringing compromises sharpness. Obviously, the likelihood of chromatic aberrations occurring increases when there is a large number of elements which, in turn, means it tends to be more of a problem with telephoto lenses and especially telephoto zooms. Additionally, the fact there's a longer light path in a telephoto lens makes it harder to focus all the wavelengths at precisely the same point. Longitudinal chromatic aberration (LoCA) – when the different colours focus in front or behind the actual focus point – is more of an issue in longer telephotos and considerable effort is needed to correct it optically… which is what's happening here.

Despite in-camera – and, indeed, post-camera – correction being possible, OM Digital Solutions' engineers still strive for a high degree of optical correction, especially in the PRO line lenses. As it happens, correction profiles – for chromatic aberrations and distortion among other things – are built into OM System lenses and applied to JPEGs as they're processed in-camera (and embedded in the RAW files). There's no provision for manual adjustment from the camera bodies – OMDS is not alone here, of course – so the objective is to do as much optically as is feasible in order to provide the best possible starting point for any software processing.

To deal with internal reflections – which also become more problematic with a larger number of elements – the 50-200mm has the newer ZERO Coating II (Zuiko Extra-low Reflection Optical) multi-coating on some elements, including the large-diameter front one, and the original ZERO Coating on others. It's a combination designed to optimise the suppression of both ghosting and flare.

Another key difference with the 40-150mm PRO is the inclusion of optical image stabilisation which provides up to 5.5 stops of correction for camera shake. Of course, stabilisation is available in the latest OM System mirrorless bodies – including the OM-5 II – but with OIS in the lens as well, there's ‘Sync IS’ which extends the correction range to seven stops with enhanced responsiveness for pitch and yaw as the two systems are working together on these axes. Seven stops of correction, by the way, means that at 400mm you could still – theoretically, at least – shoot at a shutter speed of 1/3 second based on the 1/focal length rule-of-thumb for avoiding camera shake when a lens is hand-held. In practice, it'll all come down to just how steadily you can keep a grip on things.

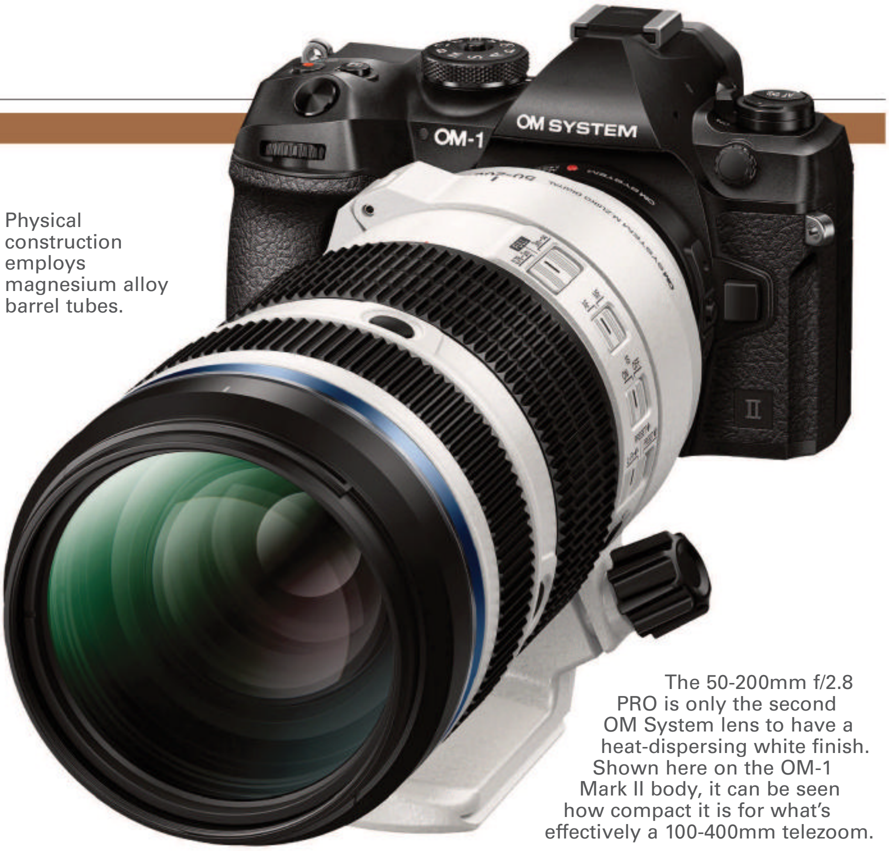
The autofocusing drive uses a VCM – voice coil motor – as is used in a number of Canon RF mount lenses mainly for its higher thrust and speed. Consequently, the 50-

IS
ON
OFF
PRESET
L-Fn
PRESET
SET

▲ Focusing distance presetting can be had with or without a confirmation beep.

FULL
0.78–3m
3m–∞
AF
MF
IS
ON
OFF

▲ Focus limiter has three settings with reduced ranges from 0.78 to 3.0 metres and 3.0 metres to infinity.



Physical construction employs magnesium alloy barrel tubes.

The 50-200mm f/2.8 PRO is only the second OM System lens to have a heat-dispersing white finish. Shown here on the OM-1 Mark II body, it can be seen how compact it is for what's effectively a 100-400mm telezoom.

200mm supports continuous AF operation at 50 fps to match the shooting speed of the OM-3 and the OM-1 duo. It'll also support the focus stacking capabilities of these cameras. The minimum focusing distance is 78 centimetres which is maintained cross the full focal range – another feature derived from the more complex internal mechanisms – and, at the effective 400mm, delivers a reproduction ratio of 1:2. That's half life-size which means that the 50-200mm also has pretty useful close-up capabilities. With the 1.4x teleconverter fitted, the maximum reproduction ratio becomes 1:1.4 and with the 2.0x unit it's 1:1 which, of course, is life-size and considered 'true' macro. The closer focusing can useful for subjects such as birds and insects or for photographing smaller details more generally.

IN THE HAND

In terms of its overall size, the OM System 50-200mm f/2.8 is similar to many full frame system 70-200mm f/2.8 zooms, but of course, you're getting 100-400mm here. It weighs in at a shade over a kilogram without its tripod-mounting bracket which is fully detachable because this lens can be comfortably hand-held in many situations. With the bracket fitted, the weight bumps up to 1.25 kilos which still isn't especially heavy for this class of telezoom. And there hasn't been any skimping on the build quality either so the barrel tubes are magnesium alloy and all the elements are glass (although there's some advanced optical tech gone into making them thinner and hence lighter).

As noted earlier, the weather protection is to the IP53 standard which, OMDS says, will be the case with all future OM System lenses. The IP53 certification requires that the lens can withstand at least three minutes with water being sprayed on it continuously at a 60-degree angle… which is probably better water resistance than most photographers!

The zooming collar is quite deep with a rubberised grip and traverses the 50-200mm focal range with roughly a 90-degree turn. It's nicely weighted, enabling pretty precise but also rapid adjustments to framing. The focusing collar is fly-by-wire (i.e. electronic) and feels like it too, but this is now the standard experience with the majority mirrorless system lenses. There's a total of four customisable function 'L-Fn' buttons located between the control rings and positioned at the points of the compass (i.e. at 90-degree intervals) to optimise accessibility. Whatever function is assigned – from the camera body – all four do the same thing. The default operation is as a focus-hold button, but you can also save this focus distance or preset one for subsequent recall and with the option of a confirmation 'beep'. The 'L-Fn' preset switch and 'SET' button are part of a bank of on-barrel controls just astern of the zooming collar along with an on/off switch for the image stabilisation, an AF/MF selector and a focusing range limiter. The limiter splits the focusing range into two – the minimum focusing distance up to three metres or three metres to infinity – plus, obviously, a full range setting.

IN THE FIELD

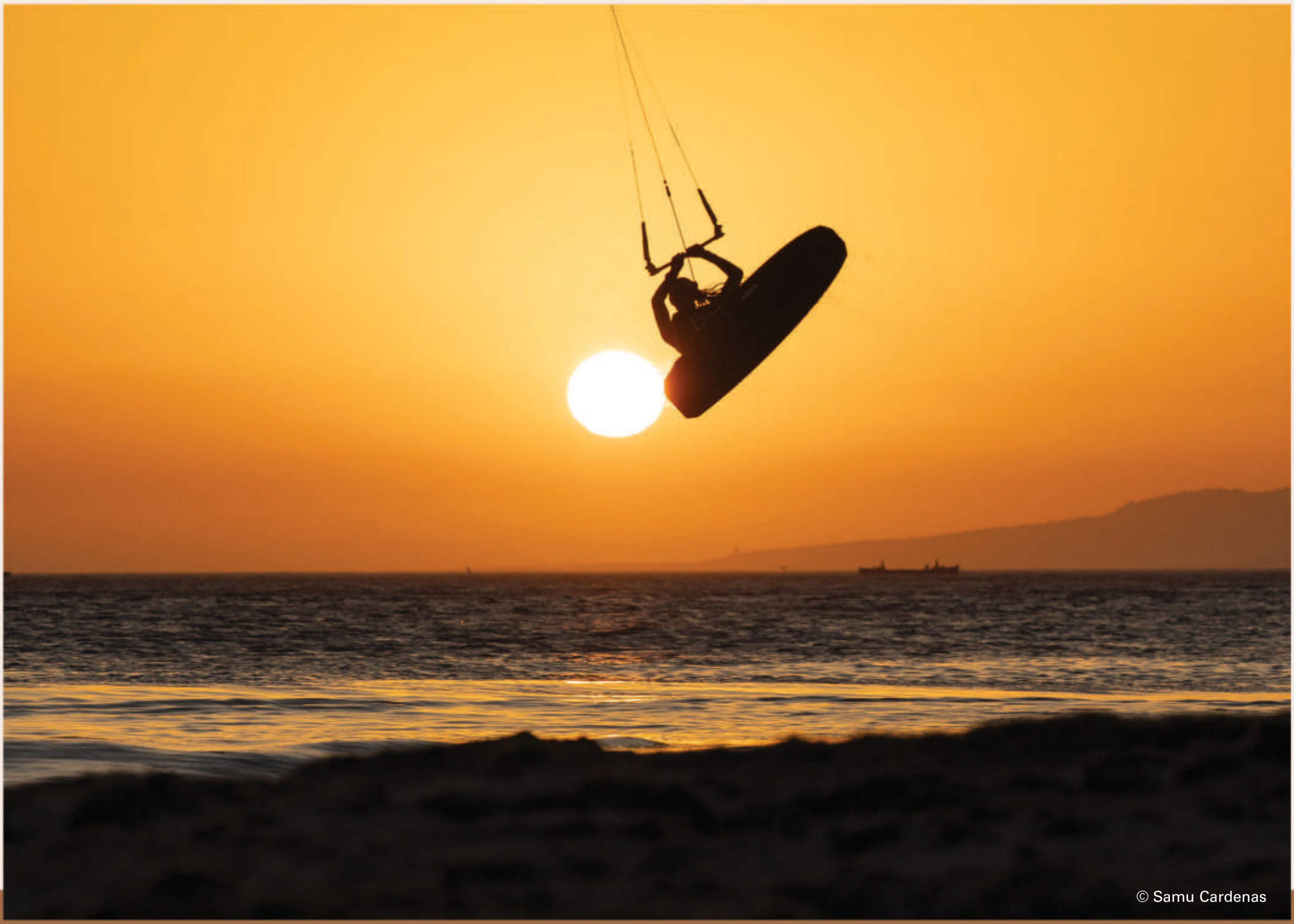
With its rugged construction and robust environmental sealing, this is a lens very much designed to cope with the challenges of working in all weather conditions and the inevitable wear-and-tear of shooting sports… which, when capturing the action is the overriding priority, can be very tough on camera gear indeed.

Along with the OM-1 Mark II body, the total weight is close to 1.7 kilos which isn't excessive, but you'll start to notice it over time, especially with long periods of hand-held shooting. In practice, as with any longer telephoto lens, a monopod can be a good solution, providing some extra support without unduly compromising either manoeuvrability or mobility.

▲There are 'L-Fn' multi-function buttons located at 90-degree intervals around the barrel. As the default they serve as focus hold buttons, but can be also be programmed to recall a preset focusing distance.

▲Weather protection measures include a substantial rubber gasket around the lens mount.

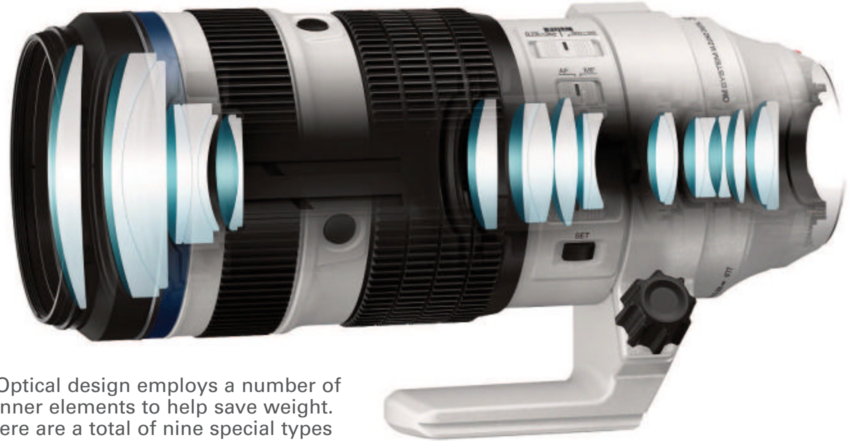
▲Tripod mounting collar can be detached completely which makes the zoom even lighter. Foot is the widely-used Arca-Swiss rail fitting so it will fit directly to many tripod heads.



© Samu Cardenas

Test pictures captured as JPEG/large/superfine files with the OM System M.Zuiko Digital ED 50-200mm f/2.8 IS PRO on the OM System OM-1 Mark II camera body. This is a very sharp lens across the entire focal range, including when shooting at the shortest focusing distances. Corner sharpness holds up extremely well when shooting at f/2.8, but does improve even further in the aperture range from f/4.0 to f/11. Some diffraction-related softening becomes noticeable at f/16 and f/22.

© Ben Knoot



▲Optical design employs a number of thinner elements to help save weight. There are a total of nine special types for provide a high degree of correction for distortion, chromatic aberrations, spherical aberrations and coma.

With both sports and wildlife, fast shutter speeds are often needed to freeze movement and, consequently, camera shake isn't really an issue, and the f/2.8 maximum constant aperture comes into its own… assuming that you aren't chasing as much depth-of-field as possible. Otherwise, the wider aperture does allow you to hang onto faster shutter speeds and/or lower ISO settings for longer regardless of the focal length. And, of course, there are plenty of situations where the shallower depth-of-field at f/2.8 is a plus, helping to isolate subjects from busy backgrounds (and also foregrounds) that would otherwise be distracting. With the inherently deeper depth-of-field of the smaller M43 sensor, the more definite separation between the subject and background delivered by f/2.8 provides more scope for selective focusing than is usually the case with the format's telephoto lenses.

While the zoom's front element has a fluorine anti-smudge coating on its exposed surface it's still worth fitting a filter for full protection and the good news here is that the screwthread fitting is 77 millimetres rather than something with a bigger diameter and a bigger price tag. Additionally, the supplied lens hood allows for adjustable filters such as a polariser or variable neutral density to be accessed via a small opening at its rear. Once you've set the filter, a little sliding cover closes the hatch to maintain the hood's full shading capability.

PERFORMANCE

All that hard work put into the 50-200mm's optical design really shines through in way it performs consistently across the focal range and also at the wider apertures. In a nutshell, this is an incredibly sharp lens, including when shooting at the shortest focusing distances. Corner sharpness holds up extremely well when shooting at f/2.8, but does improve even further in the aperture range from f/4.0 to f/11. Likewise, there's a very slight fall-off in corner brightness at f/2.8 and between 50mm and 70mm, but it's gone if you stop down to f/4.0. As is always the case with the smaller M43 size sensor, diffraction does cause some loss of definition at f/16 and even more noticeably at f/16.

Flare and ghosting are very well suppressed, but there's a fair expanse of front element that's ready to catch some glancing rays which makes using the deep hood essential if you want to optimise colour and contrast. The correction for distortion is excellent across the focal range, and it's the same for longitudinal chromatic aberration which was very hard to detect anywhere even at f/2.8.

With its VCM drive able to operate at 50 fps, the 50-200mm AF is able to keep up with fast-moving objects ensuring that the extremely reliable tracking that's possible with AI-based subject recognition is fully realised. We tested the lens on the OM-1 Mark II body – a nicely balanced combination in handling terms – and the zoom's autofocusing performance in any situation was exemplary. There was no evidence of focus breathing – a very slight variation in the subject size as the focus distance changes – at any focal length which is important if you're shooting video. However, not being a parfocal design, the focus does shift fractionally with zooming which can be easily overcome by using continuous AF to make the necessary correction.

A nine-blade diaphragm gives nicely-rounded and smooth-looking out-of-focus effects, rendering backgrounds into soft backdrops that are particularly effective when shooting wildlife and birds.

THE VERDICT

The telephoto lenses are undoubtedly the most compelling argument for the M43 sensor format, effectively delivering double the focal length than full frame in a much more compact and lightweight package. The OM System 50-200mm f/2.8 PRO is possibly the most compelling of them all; offering a superb combination of portability, versatility, AF performance and image quality.

While OMDS is promoting the outdoorsy applications, the 100-400mm equivalent focal range is actually suited to a much wider range of applications especially when it's combined with this zoom's faster constant aperture of f/2.8 and its excellent close-up focusing. It also handles well at any focal length thanks to the internal zooming, will take whatever the weather throws at you and really doesn't occupy too much real estate in a photo backpack. On top of all this, is the near faultless optical performance for a telezoom.

At over $5000, it's certainly a bit on the pricey side, but the 50-200mm PRO does so much so well that it will easily earn its keep every time you press the shutter button.

VITAL STATISTICS

OM SYSTEM M.ZUIKO DIGITAL ED 50-200mm f/2.8 IS PRO $5,199

Format: Micro Four Thirds.

Focal Length Multiplier: 1.97x.

Effective Focal Length: 100-400mm.

Angle-of-View: 24-6.2 degrees (diagonal).

Construction: 21 elements in 13 groups. Nine special elements – two Super ED (Super Extra-Low Dispersion) types, two HR (High Refractive Index) types, one ED (Extra-Low Dispersion) type, one EDA (Extra-Low Dispersion Aspherical) type and three E-HR (Extra-High Refractive Index) types.

Minimum Focus: 78 centimetres across the full focal range.

Maximum Reproduction Ratio: 1:2 at 200mm (i.e. effectively 400mm, 35mm equivalent).

Aperture Range: f/2.8 to f/22.

Length: 225.8 millimetres.

Maximum Diameter: 91.4 millimetres.

Filter Diameter: 77 millimetres.

Weight: 1075 grams without tripod mounting bracket, 1250 grams with the bracket fitted.

Features: Weather-sealed construction to IP53 standard (dust, moisture and subzero temperatures down to -10 degrees Celsius), fluorine moisture repellent coating on the exposed surface of the front element, optical image stabilisation (up to 5.5 stops of correction for camera shake, up to 7.0 stops with 'Sync IS'), VCM AF drive, internal focusing, internal zooming, focus limiter (0.78-3.0 metres, 3.0 metres to infinity, full range), four 'L-Fn' customisable focus hold buttons (all are set to the same function), 'ZERO Coating' and 'ZERO Coating II' anti-reflection multi-coatings, nine-blade diaphragm, rotatable and detachable tripod mounting collar with Arca-Swiss plate. Bayonet-fit lens hood supplied. Compatible with the M.Zuiko Digital 1.4x Teleconverter MC-14 and 2.0x Teleconverter MC-20.

Price: $5199.

Distributor: OM Digital Solutions, telephone 1300 659 678, or visit https://explore.omsystem.com/au/en/

Photo: Seiichi Nakamura

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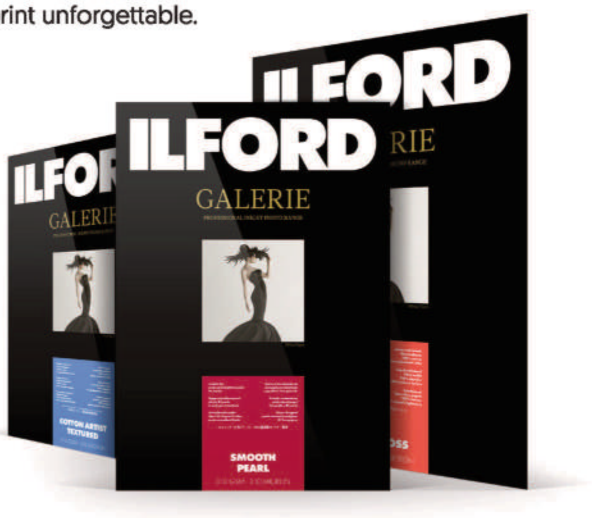

REPORT BY **PAUL BURROWS**

POLAROID
NOW GENERATION 3 'THRASHER' EDITION

THRASHER
DESTROY

FUNBOX*

If today's reincarnations of classic Polaroid instant cameras weren't funky enough, how about this limited edition celebrating the skateboard culture. *Thrasher* magazine has decorated a Now Gen. 3 camera and there's special film packs to go with it too.

Limited edition Polaroid cameras aren't new and through the 1980s and 1990s there were numerous promotional versions of the keep-it-simple OneStep box-type and folding cameras for corporations such as Coca Cola, Pepsi, McDonald's and even Camel cigarettes. There were also models based on cartoon characters such as Looney Tunes 'Taz' – who was a Tasmanian Devil by the way – which is now highly collectible… as are many of the special models. The Taz camera was pretty out there – the flip-up section mimicking menacing jaws – but even it isn't as quite in your face as the 'Thrasher' decorated version of the current Now Generation 3 model which is a very special edition because every one of them is different.

Using a process called hydro-dipping – also known as water transfer printing – each bodyshell ends up with a unique application of the 'Thrasher' graphics. Each camera shares the same basic elements of the design, but depending on the angle at which they're dipped, these will be in a different position so no two 'Thrasher' edition cameras are exactly the same. The artwork is printed on a water-soluble film which floats on

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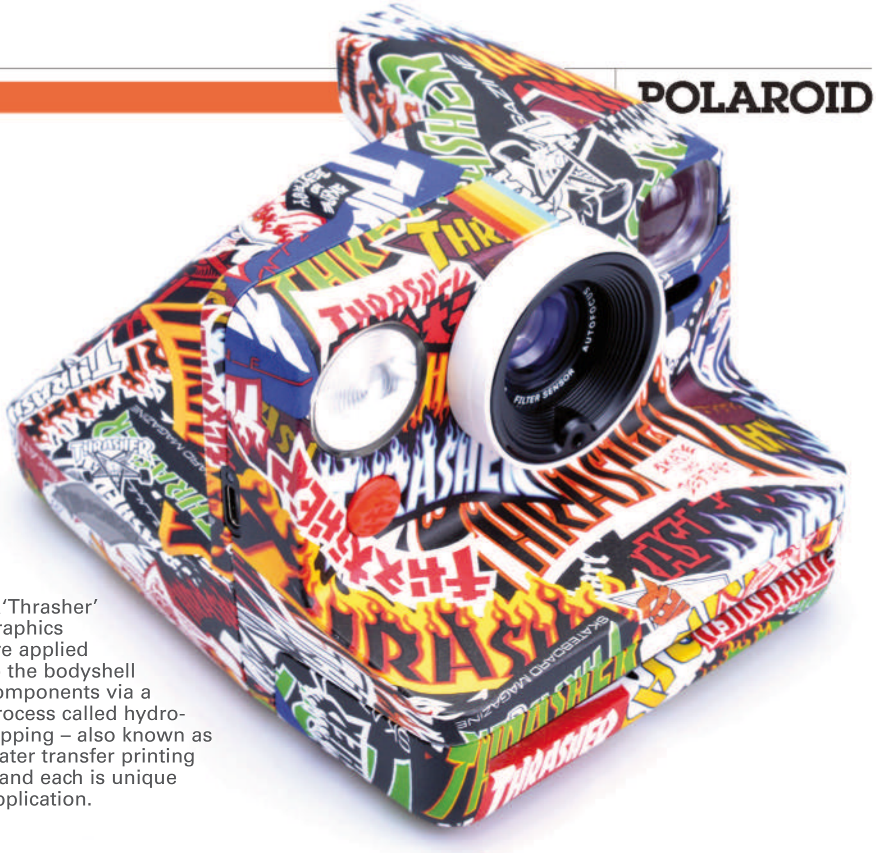
*In skateboard lingo, a funbox is a common feature of a skatepark and comprises a box structure which ramps on various sides.



▲'Thrasher' graphics are applied to the bodyshell components via a process called hydro-dipping – also known as water transfer printing – and each is unique application.

the top of a water bath and is transferred to the body casings as they're lowered into the bath. After drying, a clear protective layer is applied and the camera is then assembled in the same way as the standard Now Gen. 3 model.

As the 'Thrasher' graphic design is pretty dramatic – inspired by the art and culture of skateboarding – the camera looks… er… gnarly (which, apparently, is skateboard lingo for something that's awesome or amazing). And also in case you didn't know, *Thrasher* is a magazine for skateboarders started in San Francisco in 1981 and still going strong with a print publication, videos and digital media. There are some synergies between the skateboarding community and Polaroid cameras including unpredictability, spontaneity and being in-the-moment.

Tony Vitello, who is the owner and publisher of *Thrasher*, comments, "The skateboard community is experience based and shares that through imagery. There are sprinkles of Polaroid throughout *Thrasher's* deep archives. These moments have guided generations and brought us together, not only capturing the chaos but capturing history".

Just so you know, in skateboarding lingo, a 'thrasher' is an avid or enthusiastic skater.

THE MANY STEPS OF ONESTEP

As noted at the outset, underneath the lairy graphics of the 'Thrasher' camera is Polaroid's Now Generation 3. This model can trace its roots back to 1976 and the original OneStep camera which originally used SX-70 film, but was a lot more affordable than the SX-70 camera. It was also a rigid-bodied design that was much simpler in operation – hence the 'OneStep' name – but it was start of a long line of very successful models for the original Polaroid Corporation. The OneStep Model 1000 was the best-selling camera in the USA over the 1977 Christmas period.

In 1981 – coincidentally the same year that *Thrasher* magazine was born – Polaroid introduced a next-generation SX-70 film called Type 600 which was still a fully-integrated self-developing material, but had a much faster ISO of 640 so it was better suited to no-fuss point-and-shoot photography. The first camera in the long-lived 600 series was, logically, called the OneStep 600 which had a flip-open cover design as reprised by the current Polaroid Flip.

After the demise of the original Polaroid in 2008, a group of dedicated enthusiasts and ex-employees got together to try and keep selected product lines alive. The new venture was famously called The Impossible Project and was based in part of Polaroid's old European factory in Enschede, The Netherlands. It was a challenge to recreate the original instant print films from scratch – the recipes then still locked up by patent protections – but eventually the new I-Type system was launched in 2016 along with an all-new camera called the I-1. With more funding available and also, fortuitously, access to Polaroid Corp. intellectual property, attention turned to reviving classic Polaroid cameras and obviously the simpler OneStep box-type design was the ideal candidate. The OneStep 2 was introduced in 2017 and was essentially a modern reprise of the original flash-equipped rigid-bodied

> THERE ARE SOME SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE SKATEBOARDING COMMUNITY AND POLAROID CAMERAS INCLUDING UNPREDICTABILITY, SPONTANEITY AND BEING IN-THE-MOMENT."

FILTER SENSOR
35-40mm 1:1
POLAROID

▲ Lens employs zone-based 'autofocusing' for normal shooting and close-ups.

▲ Power button and flash on/off button. Small LED display below the former primarily serves as a frame counter, but also relays various warning indictors.

▲ In-camera battery recharging is provide the Now Gen 3's USB Type 3 port. Multi-coloured LED above shows power level.

> THE NOW MODELS ARE CLOSER TO THE ORIGINAL POLAROID ONESTEP ETHOS WHICH IS TO KEEP THINGS AS SIMPLE AS POSSIBLE WITH NO-FUSS POINT-AND-SHOOT OPERATION."

models, but with a couple of 21st century touches such as an integrated battery with in-camera recharging via a USB port. Since these new-era Polaroid cameras have their own power supply, the i-Type film packs didn't need a battery unlike the Type 600 packs. This was a clever feature of the Type 600 system and the slimline six-volt 'Polapulse' battery always had so much power left in it after all the prints had been exposed, Polaroid offered an AM/FM radio in the 1980s that could run on the empty pack. Type 600 film has also been revived, bringing new life to millions of vintage 600 series cameras. It can be used in the new cameras too, but obviously you're paying a bit extra for the pack's battery which isn't needed in these models.

The OneStep 2 has since evolved into the OneStep+ (2018), Now (2020), Now Generation 2 (2023) and Now Generation 3 models (er… now). With each generation of Now cameras there has been a Now+ version which unlocks additional features and controllability via the Polaroid smartphone app, similar to the Flip.

NO FRILLS, NO FUSS

The standard Now models have been closer to the original Polaroid OneStep ethos which is to keep things as simple as possible with no-fuss point-and-shoot operation. It's not quite one-step – i.e. one-button – as you can choose to switch the flash on or off via another button, but it's not far off it. Notably, the Gen. 3 models incorporate refinements to their focusing and exposure control – although both are still essentially fully automatic – plus the construction now includes the use of recycled materials which represent a creditable 40 percent of the total build.

Polaroid describes the Now 3's focusing as "two lens autofocusing" which actually means the automatic switching of lens elements based on the subject distance which is determined via active infrared ranging. In this case, there's a standard lens – equivalent to the 35mm focal length – with a fixed focus range of one metre to infinity. The alternative, switches in close-up lens – giving an effective focal length of 40mm – and a fixed focus range of 40 centimetres to 1.3 metres. The actual focal lengths are 94.96mm and 102.35mm and, with the auto aperture range spanning f/11 to f/64, depth-of-field makes what is essentially a simple, two-zone focusing system work quite effective. It's pretty much the same system that was originally introduced with the Polaroid OneStep Closeup 600 in 1993.

As already noted, the exposure control is fully automatic with a shutter speed range of 1-1/250 second, but there is an 'EV Trim' adjustment which provides plus/minus half a stop of compensation. It's not much, and you might well waste a print before realising it's needed, but the trick here is to anticipate when some darkening or brightening might be necessary. The Gen 3 cameras now have the metering sensor located inside the lens barrel – and just below the front element – so it's still not TTL, but a lot closer than before. Since the exposure system balances flash and daylight, it's worth leaving the flash on – it comes on anyway when the camera is powered up – unless your subject is being illuminated by direct sunlight.

Using a small button on the camera's front you can engage a self-timer or, by pressing it twice, stop a print ejecting after an exposure so you can then create a double exposure. Above the mode button is a little array of LEDs which show which mode is active and also flash to serve as the self-timer's nine-second countdown. When making double exposures, the camera's frame counter displays '1' for the first shot and then '2' after it's been taken. For a tiny circular display – located just below the camera's on/off button – it does a lot of work also relaying a whole range of warnings, including very low battery power. There's also a multi-coloured LED above the camera's USB Type C port which shows the battery power level from full (green) through half-full (orange) to low (red).

IN THE HAND

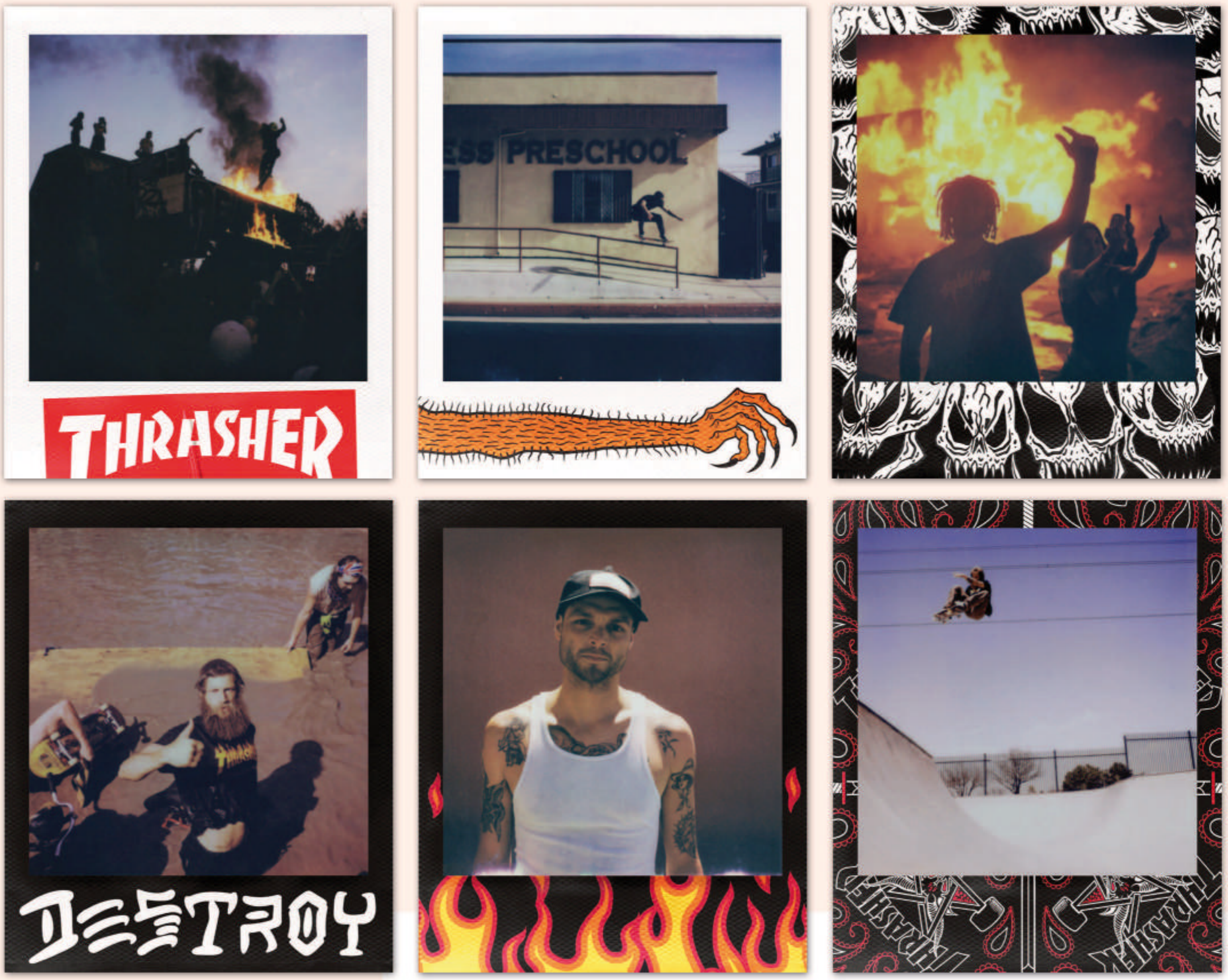
Polaroid proudly describes the Now Generation 3 as a "completely analog camera" and that pretty well sums it up. Consequently, it's the classic Polaroid instant camera experience, but with a few more frills such as the various displays and indicators. The handling is unique, but actually quite comfortable as you cradle the camera in the palm of your hand when shooting. The distinctive shape, by the way, is created by the angled mirror inside which directs the light from the lens down into the film.

The viewfinder is simply an optical tube, but it does the job in terms of framing your shot and it's really all you have to concentrate on apart from deciding about flash usage and making sure the subject isn't too close (there's a warning indicator for this so you'll know).

Film cartridge loading is completely goof-proof and, after you close the film door, the protective darkslide is automatically ejected, the frame counter will set to '8' and you're ready to go. So far, it's exactly

▲Built-in flash is best kept on all the time – it comes on as the default setting when the camera is switched on – as it helps brighten the shadows when shooting in brighter ambient lighting.

▲ Button below the lens accesses self-timer (with a nine-second countdown) and 'EV Trim' exposure compensation (although there's only half a stop of adjustment under or over).



▲Shooting in bright conditions is where the Now Generation 3 camera delivers the best results. Colour reproduction tends to be on the muted side. Brightly-coloured subjects also record well, especially when the flash is used for fill-in. ‘Thrasher’ frame art can work… or not. Photography by Tim Aguilar, copyright 2025.

has it has always been since the original OneStep cameras. However, once you take a shot and the print is ejected, you’ll notice a particular feature of the new-era cameras. It’s called the film shield and it’s flexible plastic protective cover which unfurls from the camera along with the print in order to prevent the latter’s surface being instantly dosed with available light… especially important in bright sunny conditions. The shield is actually part of the camera so resist tugging on it when retrieving the print, after which it simply rolls back into the ejection slot. It’s a requirement for the i-Type and the recreated 600 films and allows the blue opacification layer to fully spread across the print to prevent any further exposure. Polaroid suggests five seconds, but probably around ten is better which is obviously going to slow you down. Interestingly, you can retro-fit the shield to the vintage OneStep and 600 series cameras to make them better suited to the newer films.

Polaroid recommends the print should still be kept out direct light

Until development to be completed with the suggest time being “10 – 15 minutes”. In practice, it’s longer although not quite the half an hour that was required with first old Impossible Project films. As with the original Polaroid films, the ‘cooking’ actually continues for quite a while so an image will further improve in colour and contrast over the next couple of hours or even longer.

The traditional flapping of a Polaroid print immediately after it had left the camera to help speed things up – the theory being that it distributed the developing chemicals more quickly – isn’t advised anymore and will actually possibly do some damage.

However, unchanged from the good old days is the classic Polaroid instant print format which is sized at 8.8x10.7 centimetres with a square image area of 7.9x7.9 centimetres, offset towards the top edge… which is actually the product of the developer pod’s location, but now the iconic identifying feature. Fujifilm’s Instax Square look the same in this regard, but are smaller overall.

PERFORMANCE

The Now Gen 3’s instruction manual states, “Polaroid cameras love light, so the more light you have the better” and this is really the key to getting the most from any of the recreated films, especially with the cameras that have very few options for manually adjusting exposures.

The best philosophy is to expect the unexpected, but certainly don’t expect the pictorial bling that your digital camera can deliver. The current Polaroid colour film look is a distinctive one – distinctive enough to be available as effects, styles and apps for manipulating digital image files – and you have to be prepared to accept some imperfections which, if you’re feeling generous, you might call character. The term “vintage” is often used, but this isn’t any old vintage, it’s *21st century Polaroid* vintage and there’s a difference because old original Polaroid prints – say from the 1980s –

actually look at lot more contemporary than the new ones in terms of colour saturation and contrast. Even with bright colours in bright sunlight, the i-Type prints can still look quite muted with lowish contrast overall. And even in bright sunlight, leave the flash on because it will provide so fill light to help lift the shadows which can really block up otherwise. Not surprisingly, the Now Gen 3's dual-lens zone focusing system isn't as good as the Flip's four-lens arrangement, but anything in a range of a metre to around five metres will look sharp and, given the image size, there's certainly plenty of definition.

By now you've probably worked out that there's a bit of trial and error involved here which is why you'll probably want to but a pack of the standard i-Type colour film to get started rather than the special 'Thrasher Edition' version that has been released with the camera. These prints have a randomly selected frame artwork by Neckface, but also the film pack is also a bit more expensive so it's best to hone your technique before you start using the limited edition stuff. At a snip over $4.00 per print you really don't want too many ending up in the bin.

THE VERDICT

With its bright colours and hyperactive graphics, the 'Thrasher' camera is wild and is certainly a conversation starter if you're shooting in a public place. It's obviously primarily aimed at people who are into skateboarding – although it's far from being a camera that can shoot any sorts of sports action – and the Now Gen 3 comes in a range of standard dual-colour schemes if you're a bit more shy and retiring. Nevertheless, it's an instant collectible for Polaroid camera enthusiasts and, as such, not at all expensive given each is a one-off.

As has really always been the case with Polaroid low-cost consumer cameras, shooting with the Now Generation 3 model – in any guise – is still more about the whole experience and making an on-the-spot record than chasing any sort of technical excellence. We could tell you that there are better cameras in the current line-up – the Flip or, if you're really serious, the I-2 – or that you will likely do better with a rescued Impulse AF and the revived Type 600 film, but that would be missing the point. With digital imaging having taken over the instant gratification that was once the main rationale of instant photography, we now use a Polaroid camera simply because we can… and it's different… and it's fun… and that's it. The 'Thrasher' limited edition adds a little touch of madness to this, but hey, don't fight it, just go along for the ride… and try not to fall off!

i-Type
Color i-Type Film
THRASHER
polaroid
8 LIMITED ED
INSTANT PH
8 LIMITED EDITION INSTANT PHOTOS
THRASHER

◀There are limited edition 'Thrasher' i-Type film packs as well. The prints feature randomly selected frame artwork by Neckface.

VITAL STATISTICS

POLAROID NOW GENERATION 3 $269

Type: Fixed lens instant camera delivering self-developing colour or B&W prints using Polaroid i-Type or 600 series instant print films.

Lens: Two lens hyperfocal system with zones set at 0.4-1.3 metres and 1.0 metres to infinity. Focal lengths are 94.96mm and 102.35mm equivalent to 35mm and 40mm. Aperture range is f/11 to f/64 with six settings. Angle-of-view is 40 degrees horizontal and 41 degrees vertical.

Focusing: Two zone 'autofocusing' with automatic lens switching according to the subject distance using infrared beam ranging.

Focusing Range: 40 cm to infinity.

Shutter Speeds: 1-1/250 second.

Exposure Control: Fully automatic with 'EV Trim' for +/-0.5 EV compensation.

Sensitivity: ISO 640.

Continuous Shooting: Single shot only.

Print Format: Polaroid i-Type or Type 600. Print size = 107x88 mm. Image size = 79x79 mm.

Flash: Built-in with automatic output control based on subject distance and ambient light levels. Range is 40 centimetres to 4.5 metres.

Viewfinder: Tunnel-type optical.

Features: Double exposure facility, self-timer (nine seconds delay), tripod mounting socket, LED battery power level indicator, auto power off (two minutes), USB Type C port.

Power: Rechargeable 3.7 volts 750 mAh lithium-ion internal battery with in-camera recharging via USB C.

Dimensions (WxHxD): 112.2x94.0x150.2 mm.

Weight: 448 grams (without film pack).

Price: $269. Polaroid Color i-Type Film – 'Thrasher Edition' is priced at $34.95 for an eight-print pack. Prints have a randomly selected frame artwork by Neckface.

Available: JB Hi Fi stores and online at https://www.jbhifi.com.au For more information visit https://www.polaroid.com/en_au/campaigns/polaroid-thrasher-edition

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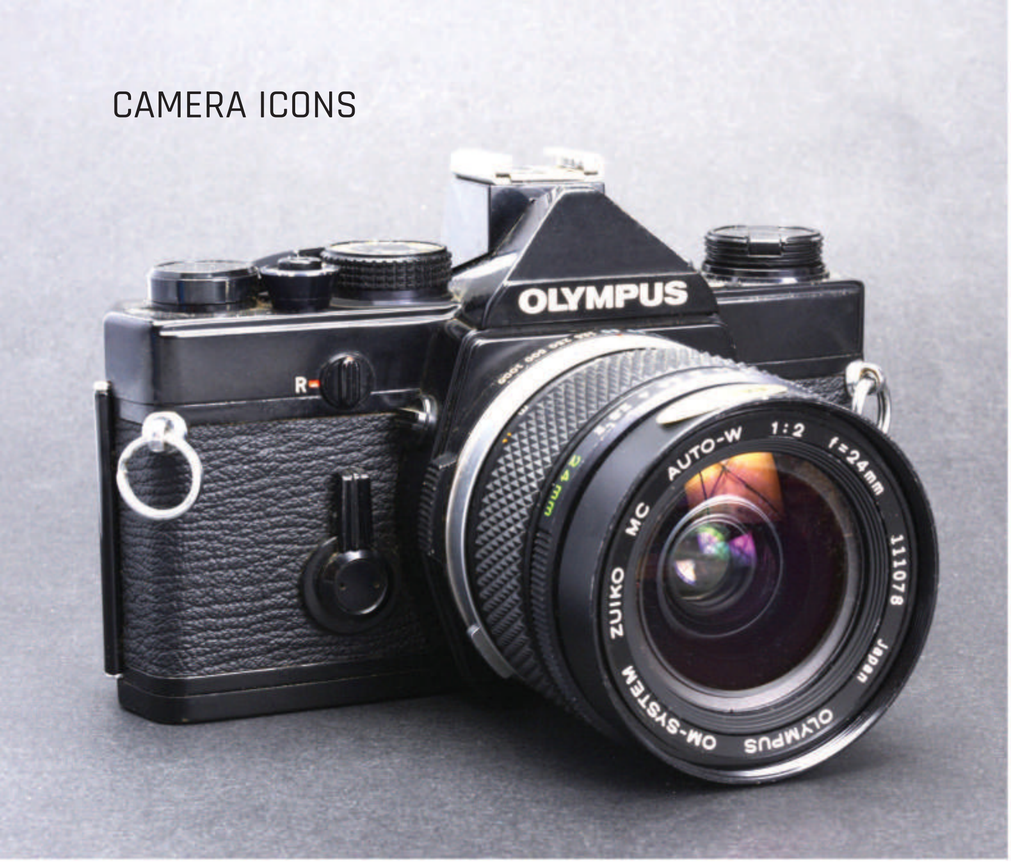

OLYMPUS OM-1

These are the cameras that, in one way or another, had a significant influence on photographers and photography. The Olympus OM-1 not only changed the course of 35mm SLR design, but helped build its maker into one of Japan's most powerful camera brands for at least the next four decades.

In the world of 35mm SLRs, there's the era before the Olympus OM-1 and the time after. It's one of the great milestones in camera design, although it was the original OM-1's smallness that made it such a big deal. It started life as the M-1 and made its debut at the 1972 Photokina exhibition.

Dramatically downsized compared to anything that had been seen before, the M-1 was another masterpiece from Olympus's legendary camera designer, Yoshihisa Maitani. However, word soon reached Leica that Olympus had adopted the model designation "M-1" and the German camera maker objected… even though its M-series cameras were 35mm rangefinders, not reflexes. Production had already begun, but the ever-courteous Maitani agreed to a revision and so, when his new baby was officially launched in 1973, it was renamed the OM-1. It's thought that around 50,000 models badged M-1 were sold before the change. Ironically, Maitani was using a Leica RF camera when he first joined Olympus in 1956, and it was its combination of compact dimensions and high performance that was the starting point for his revolutionary SLR.

The 35mm SLR was popularised with professionals in the 1960s largely through the efforts of Nikon and its ground-braking F, while Pentax's Spotmatic made it popular with amateurs. Olympus's first full frame SLR – the FTL, introduced in 1971 – was a competent, but unremarkable camera which used the M42 screwthread lens mount. Maitani realised this wasn't going to cut the mustard in an increasingly competitive market.

"There is little value in producing a new camera that is hardly distinguishable from its competitors," he wrote a few years later. "If, however, a new single lens reflex camera appears on the market that provides a functionality and a system performance unavailable in previous cameras of this type, its welcome will be assured since it makes a true contribution to raising standards and establishing new values. If, in addition, it is the kind of camera that inspires increasing satisfaction as the photographer gets to know it better, it will gain a permanent place in his affections as an indispensable photographic tool."

It took a while for Maitani to convince his employers about his ideas, but once he got the go-ahead, he set about achieving his goal of completely redefining the 35mm SLR. He didn't just want a slight reduction in the size or weight either, he wanted both to be halved, taking the Nikon F as the reference point. In the end, this proved to be over-ambitious, particularly because it would compromise durability, but nevertheless he still wanted something that would look and feel significantly smaller than anything else on the market.

The technical challenges were many, but Maitani noted that, "the interior of an SLR is not all crowded; there are crowded areas and empty areas". The crowded areas were those containing the core functions, such as advancing the film, releasing the shutter or changing the shutter speeds. Maitani hit upon the idea of relocating some of these core functions to the less crowded parts of the camera body and this, for example, led to the OM-1 having its shutter speed selector located around the lens mount.

Millimetres Matter

Maitani steadfastly resisted any requests to make the camera any bigger than he had decreed, but begrudgingly yielded when it was obvious it was really necessary… such as adding space for a seal to splashproof the battery compartment. Many years later, he still ruefully told audiences, "So the camera we have now is a millimetre taller than the dimensions that I first approved!"

Apart from the reduced size and weight – the initial target was 600 grams for the body – Maitani also demanded increased durability. For instance, he wanted the shutter assembly to be good for 100,000 cycles when, at the time, 10,000 actuations was considered acceptable. He also wanted both the shutter and the reflex mirror mechanism to be quieter in their operations and create less shock. Alloys replaced brass for the body covers and the pentaprism viewfinder was completely redesigned to eliminate the traditional condenser (further saving weight). Even brass screws were replaced by steel ones which helped save a few milligrams overall. In the end, the OM-1 body undercut the target weight by a whopping 90 grams.

Olympus quickly followed up with the 'MD' version, introduced in 1974 and which could be fitted with a 5.0 fps motordrive (although this was actually always possible, but the baseplate had to be modified on the earlier models). The OM-1N appeared in 1979 with a few minor revisions, mostly relating to the fitting of dedicated T-series flash guns via a new hotshoe unit. Production continued until 1988, continuing on long after its intended successor, the OM-3, had been introduced.

Over 50 years later, the first OM-1 is still an exquisite piece of design. Even compared to the smallest OM System bodies it's truly compact, although of course, it's a fully manual, mechanical camera versus the all-singing, all-dancing mirrorless cameras. Without the optional hotshoe fitted, the lines are clean and crisp, and whole thing looks beautifully proportioned. There's a purity of design that's only possible when form and function are so perfectly aligned. .

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2025

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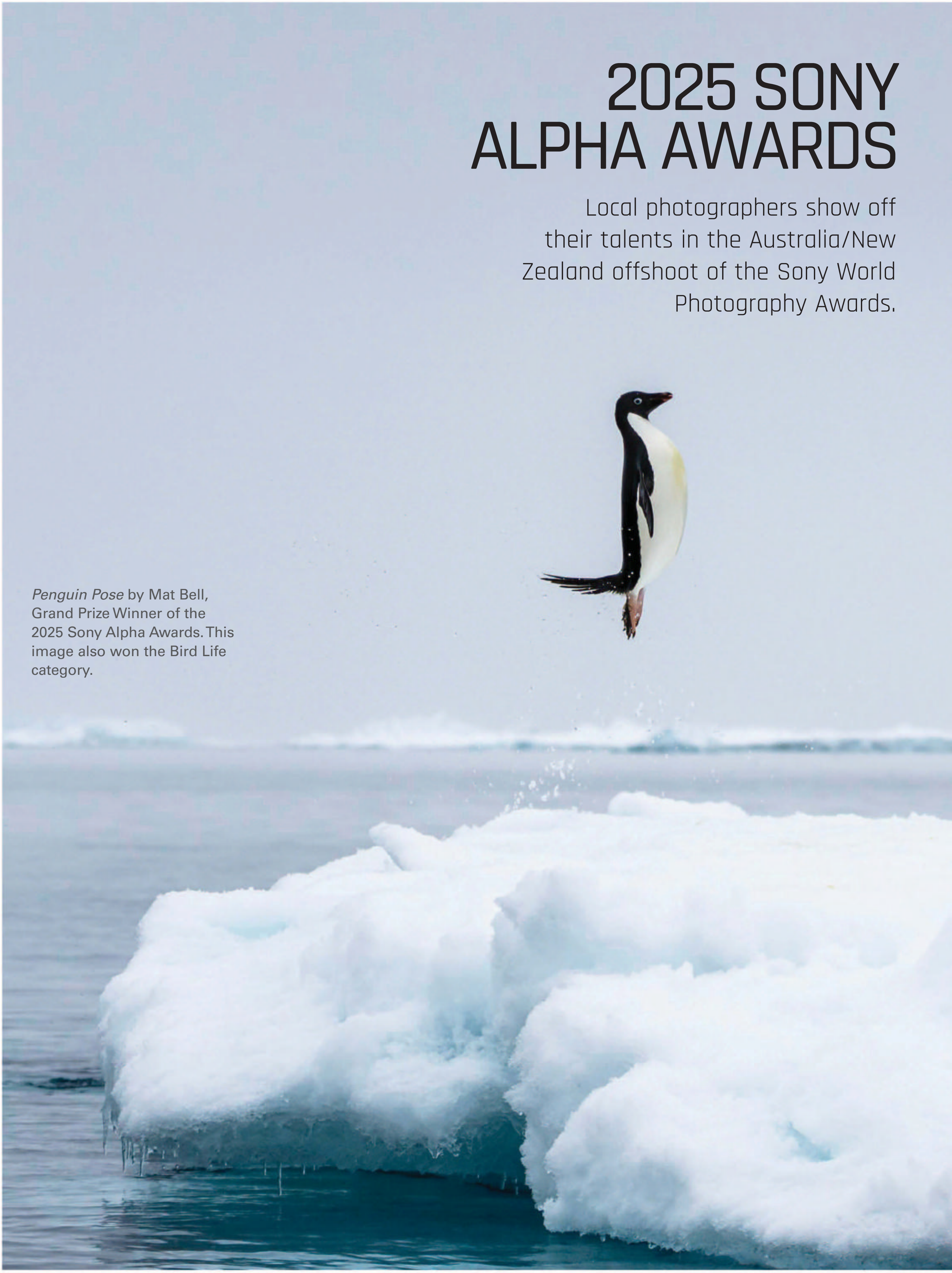
2025 SONY ALPHA AWARDS

Local photographers show off their talents in the Australia/New Zealand offshoot of the Sony World Photography Awards.



Penguin Pose by Mat Bell, Grand Prize Winner of the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards. This image also won the Bird Life category.

Specifically open to photographers resident in Australia and New Zealand, the annual Sony Alpha Awards celebrates its tenth year of competition in 2025. Entries were invited in 13 categories, including Landscape, Portrait, Editorial, Creative, Sport and Astrophotography. New for 2025, the Nature category was expanded into three more specific categories called Bird Life, Sea Life and Wildlife.

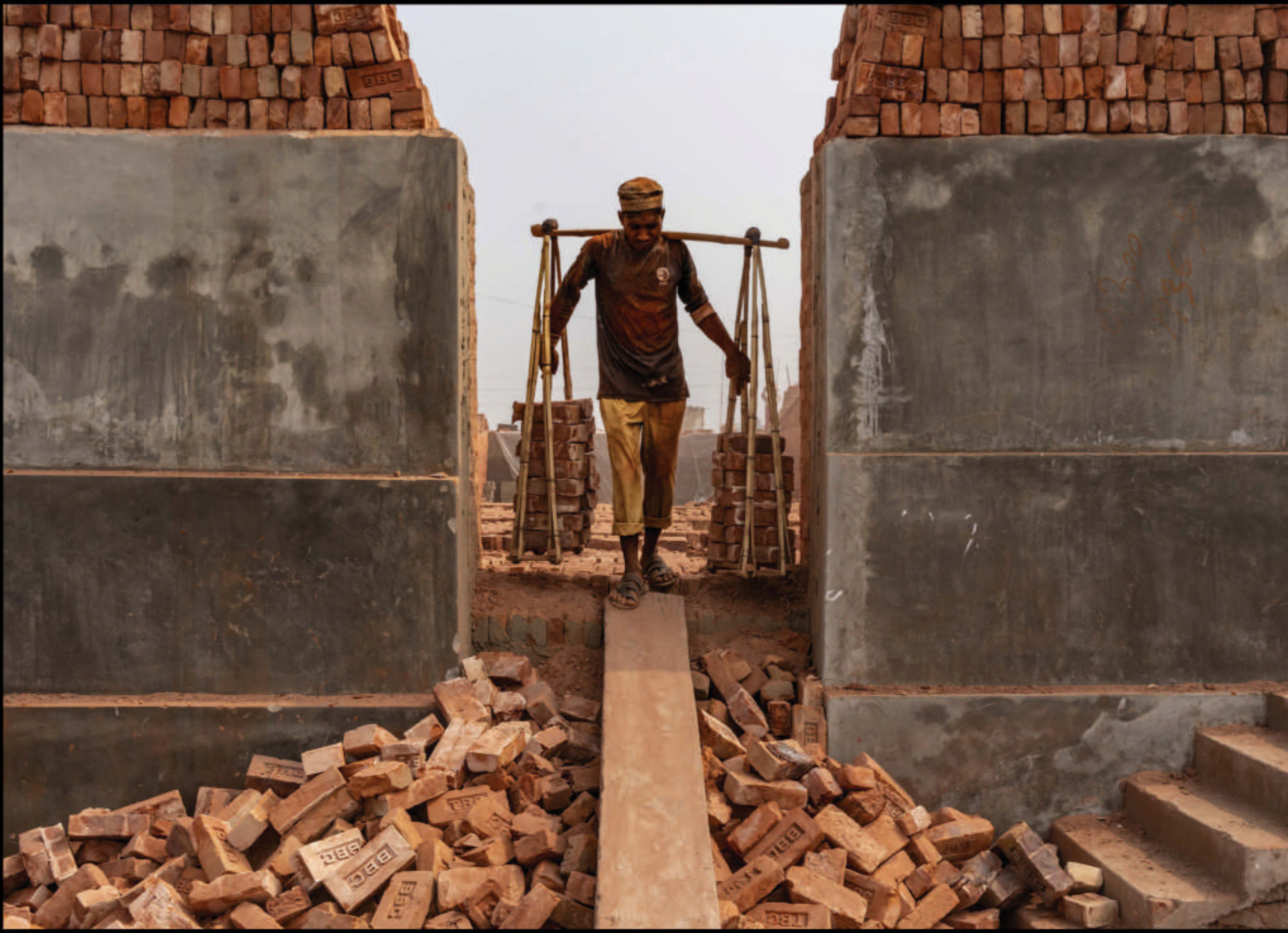
The Alpha Awards aspire to drive creativity, reward professionals and enthusiasts alike, and showcase exceptional photography. Entries must have been taken with Sony Alpha system cameras and lenses. However, entries to the Youth category could be captured on any brand of camera, and also smartphones. This year, entries in the Youth Category had to feature or be themed on the keyword "Bridge". Entry to all categories was free.

The 2025 competition attracted over 3000 entries and the overall Grand Prize winner was judged by Scott Gray who is CEO of the World Photography Organisation which runs the Sony World Photography Awards. A 13-strong judging panel was made up of professional photographers from both Australia and New Zealand and who are expert in each of the competition's category.

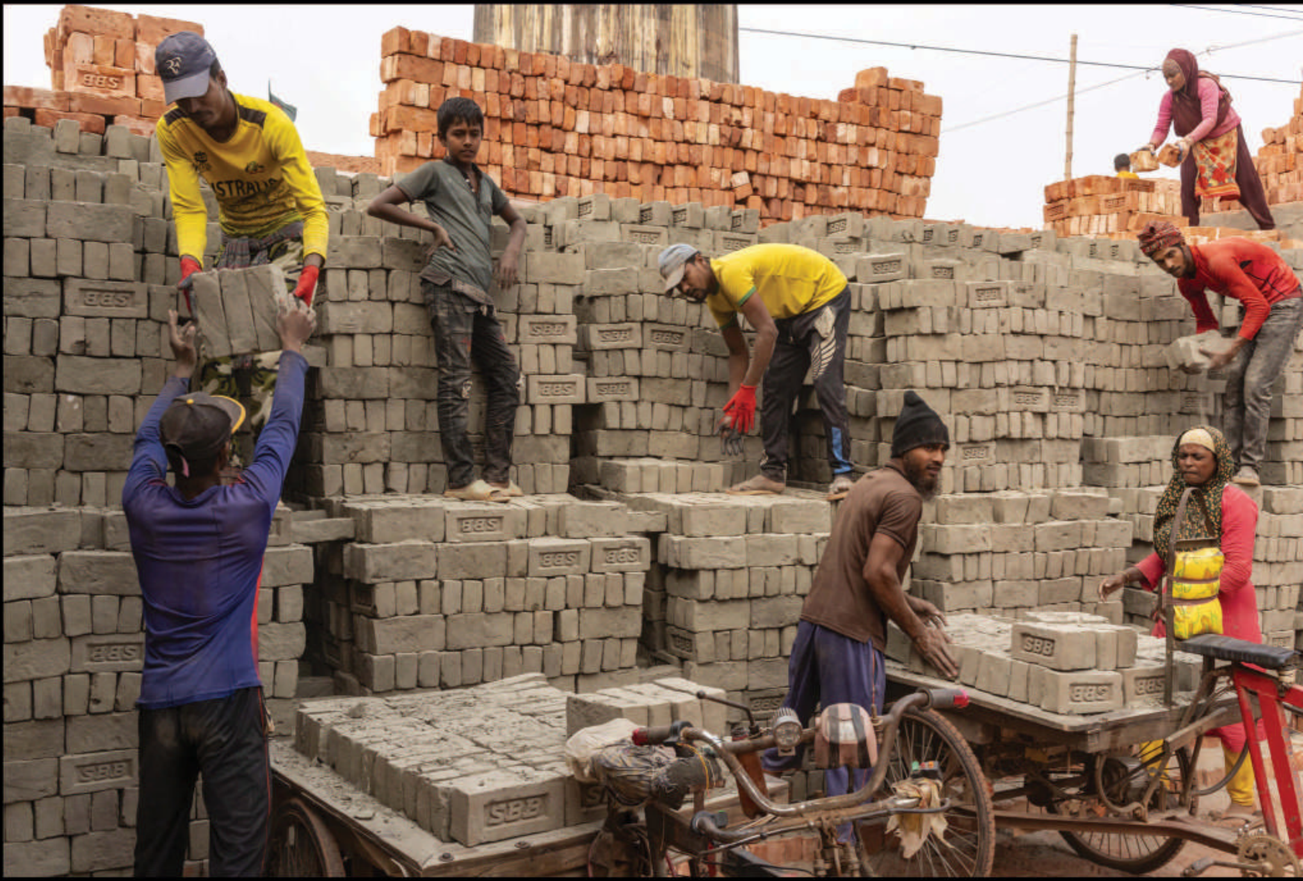
The overall winner of the Alpha Awards for 2025, Mat Bell, received $10,000 worth Sony camera equipment. The prize for each category winner was Sony camera gear to the value of $4000.

Look out for details of the 2026 competition at **https://scene.sonyanz.com/competitions/alpha-awards**

SIX



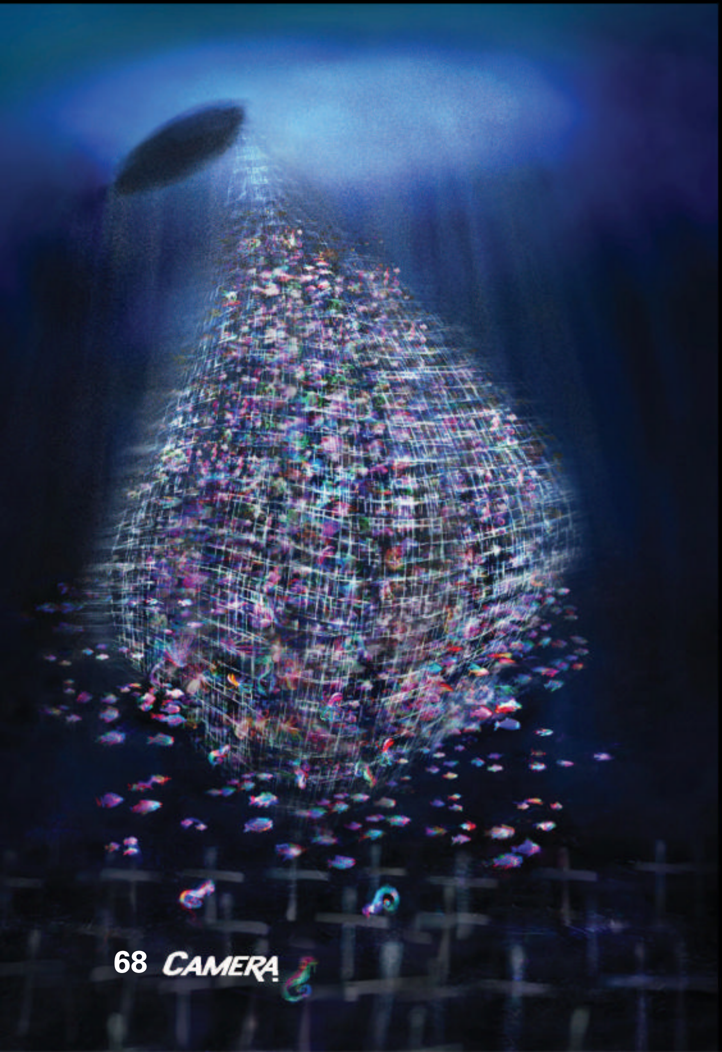
Dhaka Brickworks – The Dignity Of Labour by David Symonds, portfolio of five images which won the Editorial category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards



▼ *Deep Sea Plunder* by Agatha Lambert, winner of the Creative category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

▲ *Te Mata Fog* by Meghan Maloney, winner of the Landscape – Partners & Affiliates category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

▼ *A Street In Barcelona* by Demas Rusli, winner of the Open – Partners & Affiliates category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

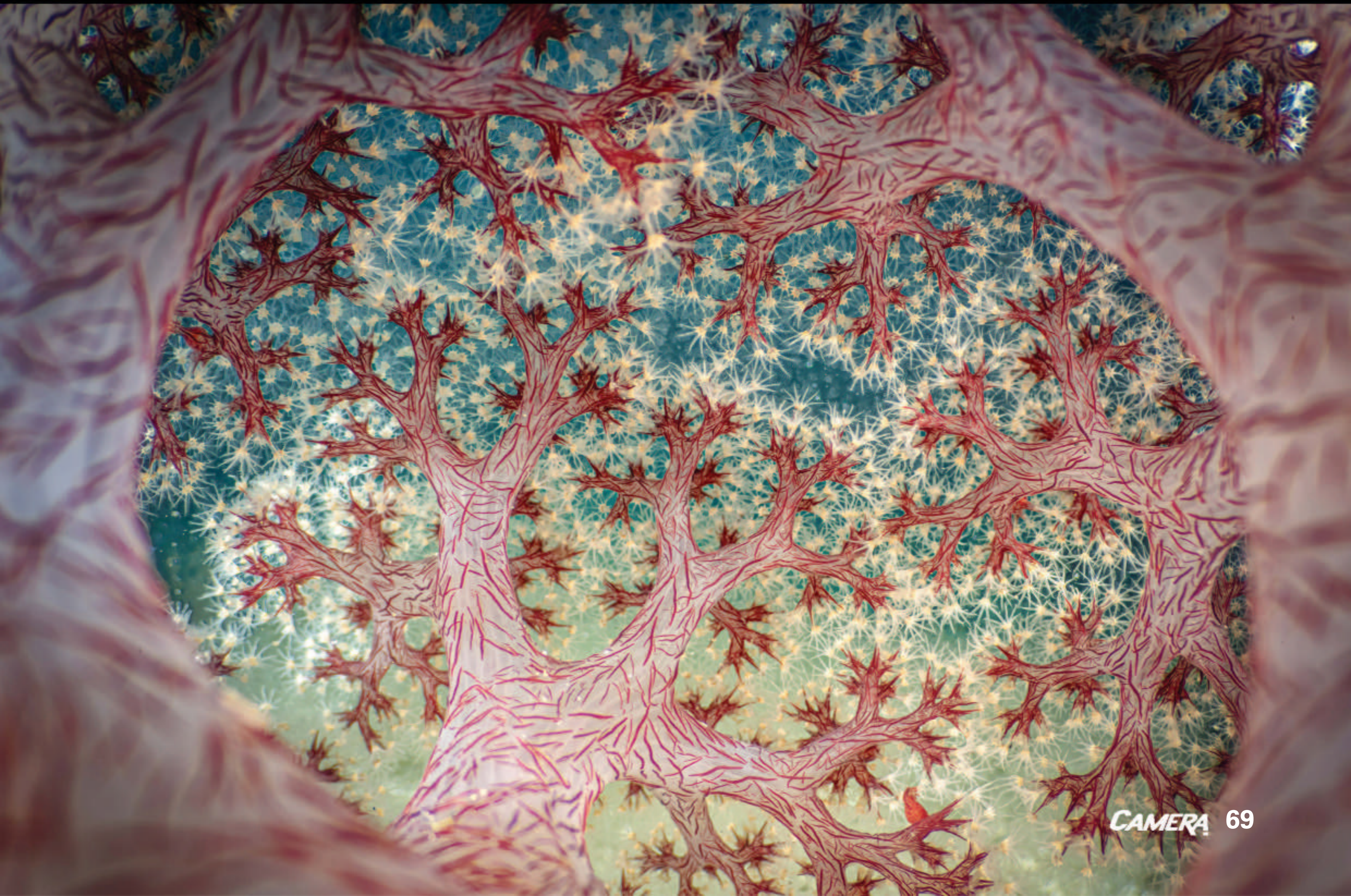


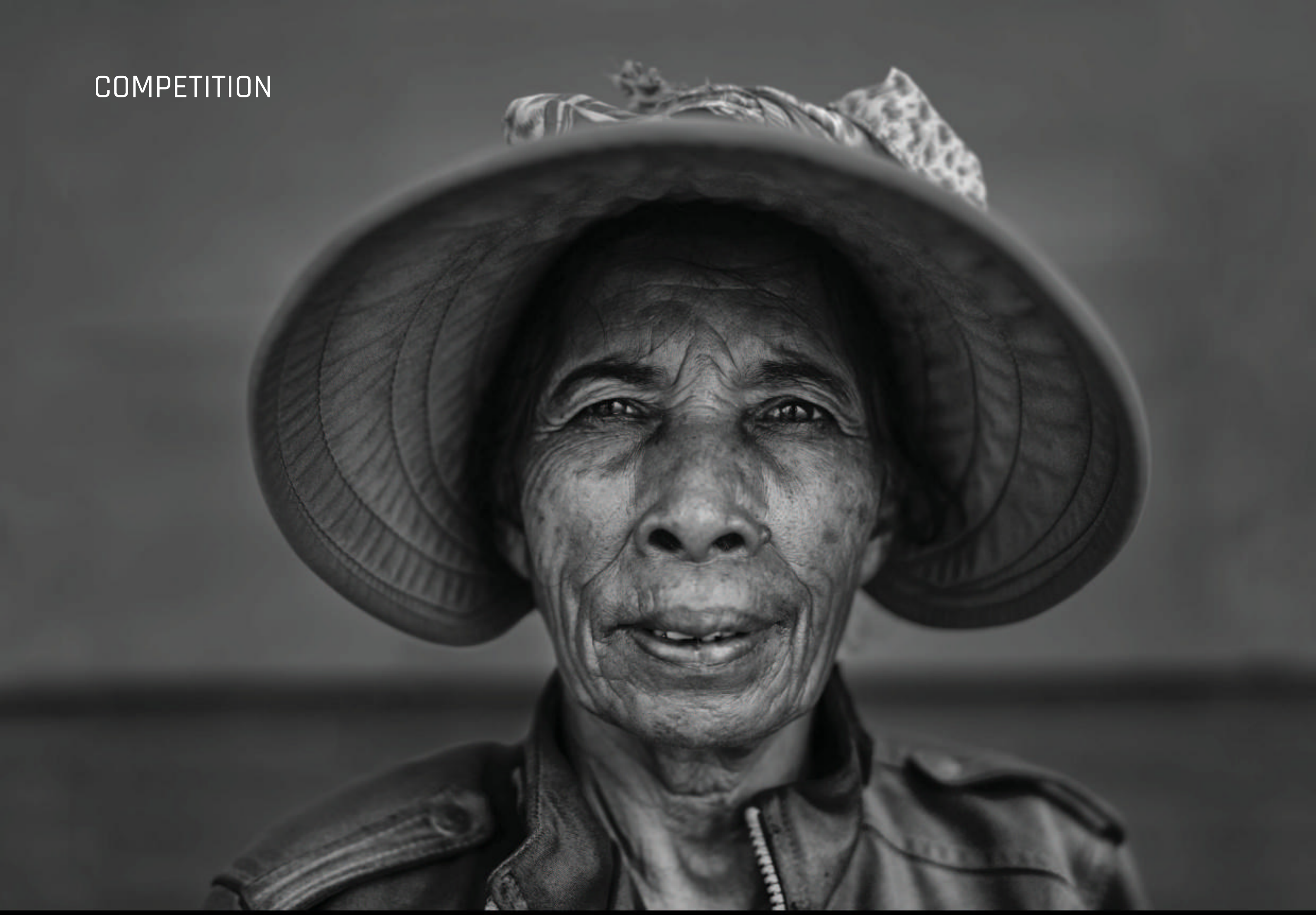
SUPER
MARKET

▲ *Echoes In Motion* by Joanne Stephan, winner of the Portrait – Partners & Affiliates category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

▼ *Fractal Forest* by Ross Gudgeon, winner of the Sea Life category in the 2025

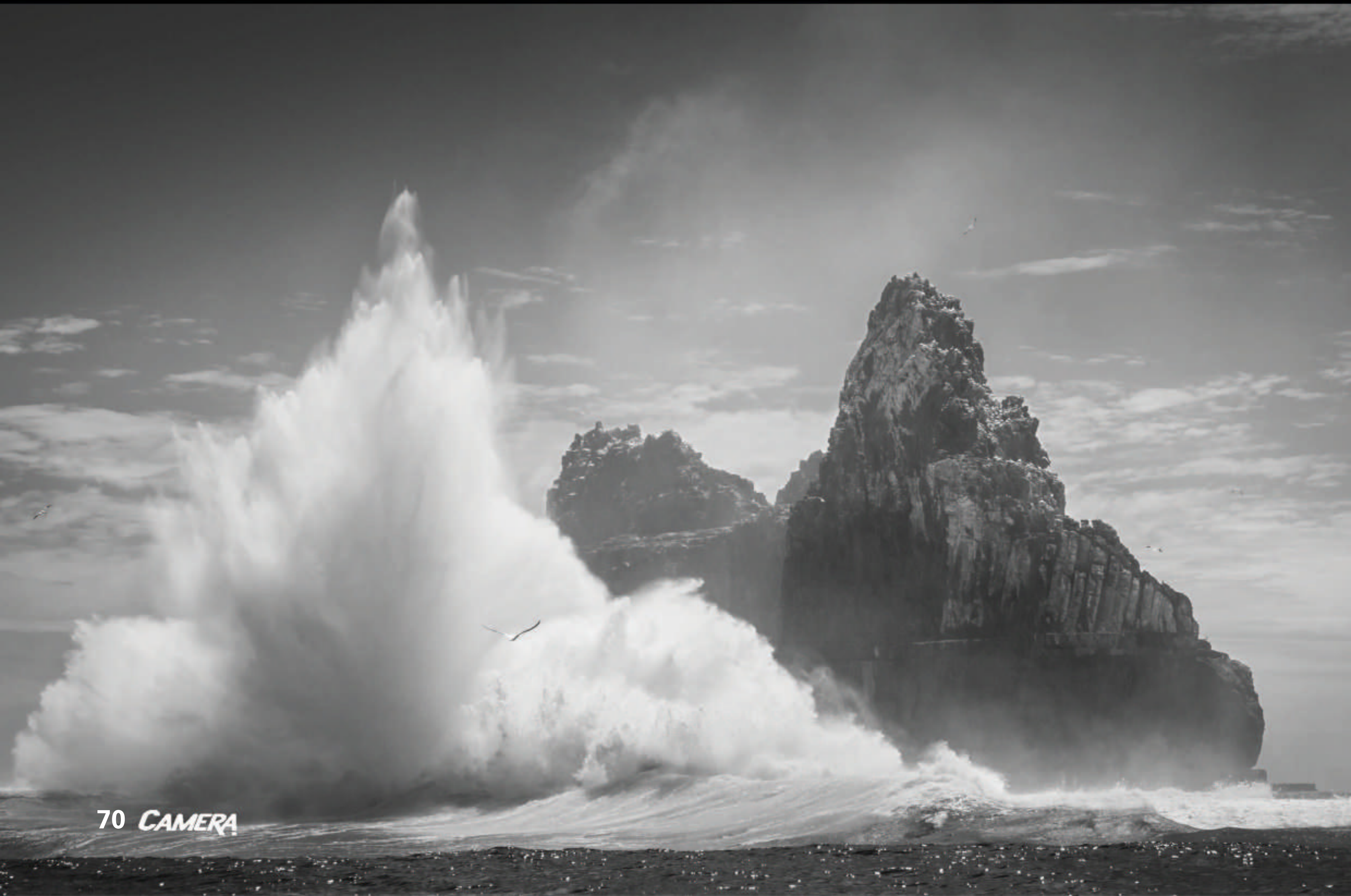
▲ *Blossom* by Lewis Burnett, winner of the Wildlife category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

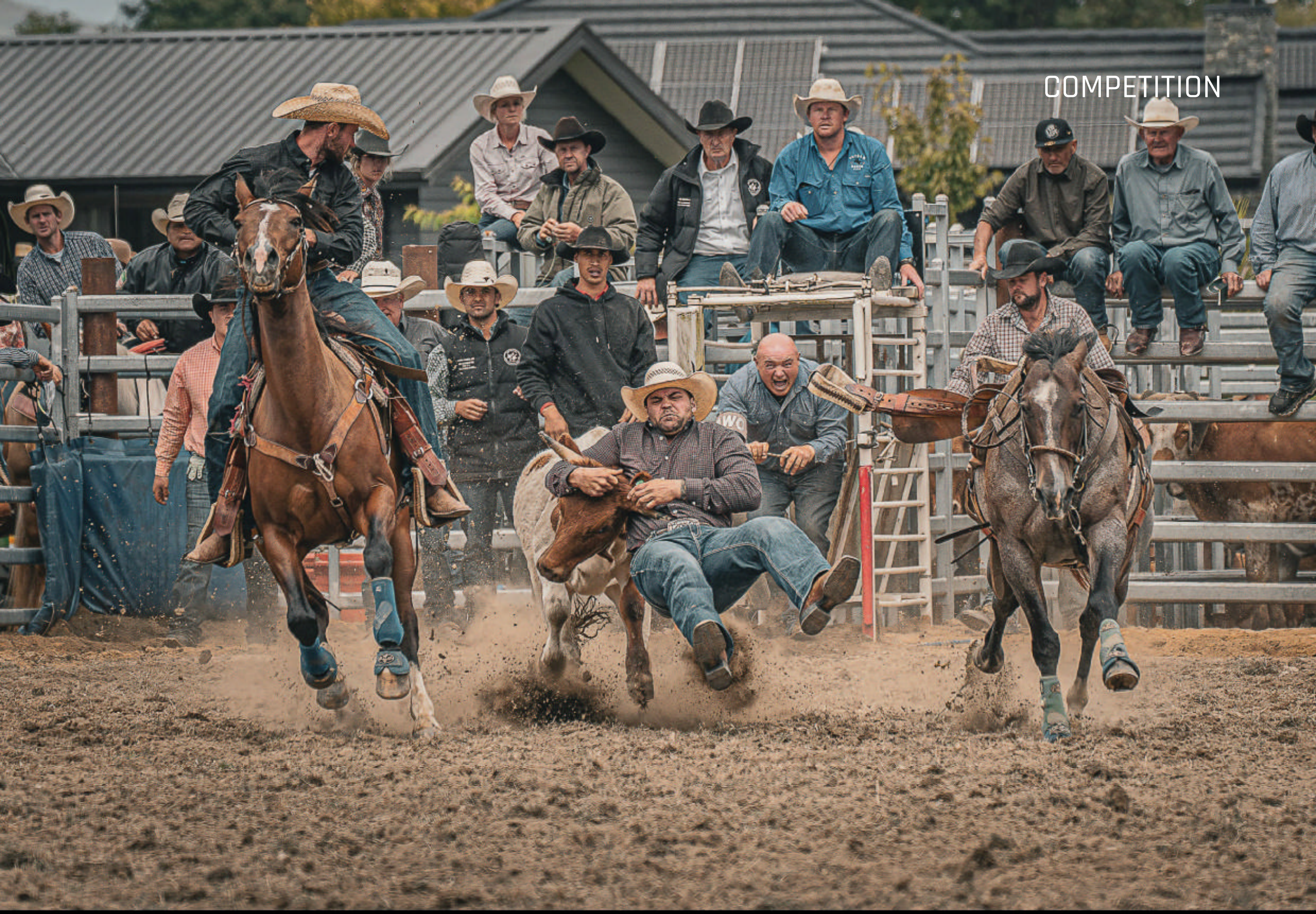




▲ *Woman By The Sea* by Benizi Santamaria, winner of the Portrait category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

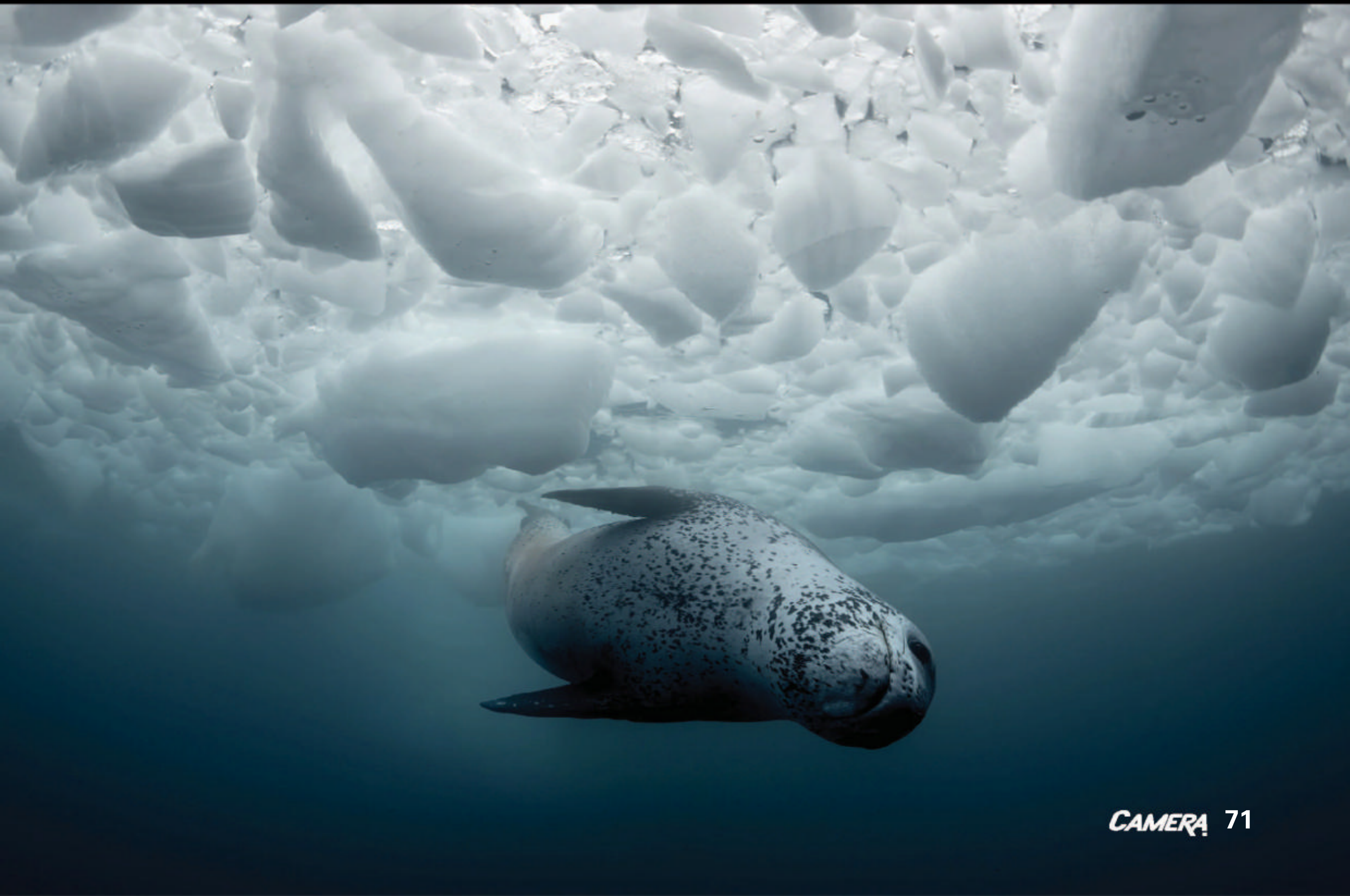
▼ *MIRROR* by Nicholas Nairn-Smith, winner of the Seascape category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.





▲ *Committed To The Catch* by Susan Church, winner of the Sport category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

▼ *A Leopard's Curiosity* by Craig Parry, winner of the Wildlife – Partners & Affiliates category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.



▲ *Where The Land Meets The Sea, A Wild Place To Be* by Jarvis Smallman, winner of the Youth category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards. This category is open to students between the ages of 13 and 18.

▼ *Generational Love* by Rachel Jordan, winner of the Wedding category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

Antarctic Mirage by Andrew Hutchinson, winner of the Landscape category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards

Leviathan by Ollie Hudson, winner of the Astrophotography category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

Ghost In The City by Henry Chow, winner of the City/Street category in the 2025 Sony Alpha Awards.

REPORT BY **PAUL BURROWS**

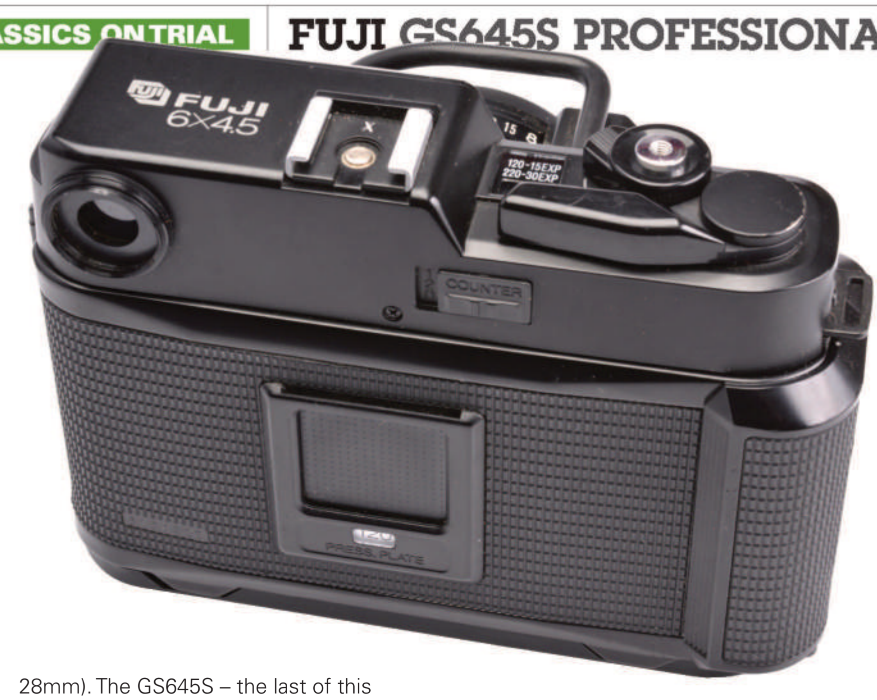
FUJI
GS645S PROFESSIONAL

▲The GS645S is quite close in size to the GFX100RF and, despite an all-plastic construction, still a bit heavier.

ROLL CALLING

Inspiring the digital GFX100RF is a long line of Fujifilm fixed-lens rollfilm cameras dating from the late 1970s. The 6x4.5cm format models offered an enticing combination of image size and portability. And the earlier mechanical models are still very appealing today.

For a long time making the jump up to medium format photography from 35mm not only involved a good deal of expense, but also adapting to bigger, heavier and slower cameras, especially if you wanted an SLR. While the 6x4.5cm format had been around for many decades previously (at least dating back to the 1920s), Mamiya introduced the first SLR system to exclusively use the image size in 1975 – the M645 – and it sparked a revival. There were subsequently dedicated 6x4.5cm SLRs from Bronica, Pentax and Contax; and rangefinder cameras from Fujifilm and Bronica… the former's all fixed-lens models. The smaller frame size not only allows for more compact camera bodies but, logically, also more frames from a roll of



▲ Film advance is via a single-action lever and film loading is easy. Camera back hinges and opens conventionally so the medium format GS645S works very much like a 35mm camera from the same period.

120/220 film… making it more economical on a 'per shot' basis compared to 6x6cm or 6x7cm.

The smallest of the mainstream rollfilm formats is still 2.7x larger than a 35mm frame so it's not hard to see how 6x4.5cm became quite popular with enthusiast-level photographers as well as many professionals who appreciated the enhanced portability of the cameras (especially for applications such as weddings and on-location portraiture). The 6x4.5cm image size is half a 6x9cm frame so it ends up as a vertically orientated frame on the film and with a 3:4 aspect ratio. Consequently, in the SLRs the film transport ran up/down rather than left/right so the framing on the film returned to landscape (i.e. 4:3 aspect), but the RF cameras had to retain a horizontal-travel transport meaning that the frames remain vertically orientated as in a half-frame 35mm compact like the Pentax 17. If you want to shoot in the landscape aspect you have to turn the camera on its side. It's a bit mind-bending at first, but not hard to get used to in practice. A 120-length roll delivers 15 frames – or 16 depending on how the film transport works – compared to 12 for the 6x6cm and ten for 6x7cm. The double-length 220 roll – made possible by only using backing paper on the leader and lead-out – delivers 30 frames which makes it an even more attractive proposition when shooting in the 6x4.5cm format, but unfortunately there isn't such a wide selection of emulsion types unless you're happy to try out expired stock.

Fujifilm's 6x4.5cm camera line began in 1983 – when it was still using the Fujica branding – with the GS645 Professional – which essentially a more modern interpretation of the old 6x6cm 'folder' design. It was fitted with a Fujinon 75mm f/3.4 lens (equivalent to 45mm in the 35mm format) mounted on bellows so it could be retracted into the camera body, making for an even more compact package. This was followed by the GS645S with a rigidly-mounted Fujinon 60mm f/4.0 lens (equivalent to 35mm) and the GS645W with a 45mm f/5.6 lens (equivalent to 28mm). The GS645S – the last of this particular series and launched at the 1984 Photokina – has a distinctive curved 'roo bar' arrangement which protects the front rim of the lens from knocks. It's worth noting that Fujifilm labelled all its rollfilm cameras "Professional" which obviously identified the target market but also looked impressive if you were an amateur shooter.

PRACTICAL CLASSIC

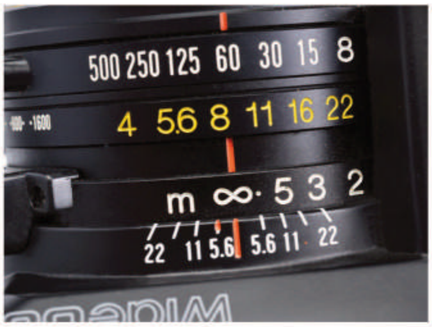
The GS645S Professional is reasonably close in size to the digital GFX100RF although still a bit bulkier overall and around 100 grams heavier. It's additionally labelled "Wide 60" on the front panel. The construction is almost exclusively polycarbonate both inside and out but still feels solidly built as it's pretty much a one-box shell.

The camera back is conventionally hinged with a single-action film advance lever which automatically recocks the shutter. As noted earlier, the film is loaded left-to-right, and the pressure plate is manually adjusted to either 120 or 220. You need to do this because, without the backing paper, the longer length film is obviously thinner so a slight increase in pressure is needed to ensure it's kept absolutely flat in the film gate. A switch on the camera back sets the frame counter to run to either 15 or 30. The hubs for locating the feed and take-up spools are spring-loaded and released via a small red button alongside each one which makes both loading and unloading largely fumble-free.

Beyond the film advance lever and the shutter release – which is lockable – all the settings are made on the lens, namely apertures, shutter speeds and film speeds. Commonly during the 1980s, medium format cameras still tended to be fully manual and mechanical even though electronics and automation were making significant inroads into the 35mm world. The notable exceptions were the 6x6cm Rolleiflex SLX (1976) and the 6x4.5cm Pentax 645 (1984) which both offered automatic exposure control… the full 'PASM' selection in the case of the latter. The Pentax was launched in the same year as the GS645S as was Rollei's successor the SLX, the 6006, which added TTL flash metering and aperture-priority auto to the

120-15EXP
220-30EXP
LOCK

▲ A 120 rollfilm length yields 15 6x4.5cm frame while the 220 length doubles this to 30. The film pressure plate needs to be manually set between the two lengths.



▲ All the settings are on the lens – apertures, shutter speeds, film speeds and the self-timer.

▲ Viewfinder is vertically orientated for the 6x4.5cm format so the camera needs to be turned on its side to shoot in the landscape framing.

▲ The GS645S model is notable externally for the curved 'roo bar' that protects the front of the lens.

▲ Note the 'EBC' initials, indicating that the lens has Fujifilm's 'Electron Beam Coating' multi-coating. The 60mm focal length is the equivalent of 35mm on the 35mm/full frame format.

▲ Tabs on the control collars for setting apertures and focusing make for easier operation from behind the camera.

earlier camera's shutter-priority control. All these models had motorised film transports as well, but it wouldn't be until 1995 that Fujifilm offered such luxuries in a 6x4.5cm fixed-lens camera.

A big plus, however, is that the GS645S has built-in metering which uses a GPD (gallium arsenic phosphor) photocell located inside the viewfinder and giving centre-weighted average measurements with a sensitivity range of EV 4-18 at ISO 100. It's linked to a simple under/OK/over LED display, but it's all you need if you know what you're doing with exposure control. The meter is powered by a couple of 1.5-volt button-type alkaline cells (LR44 or equivalents) which are housed in the camera's base.

The shutter is a leaf-type Copal #00 mechanism in the lens and has a speed range of 1/1/500 second plus a 'T' (time) setting for long exposures. The advantage of 'T' over 'B' is that the shutter is opened with one press and closed with a second rather than needing to be held – or locked – open for the duration of the exposure. The GS645S still has a cable-release socket in the shutter button, but here you'd use one to help minimise any vibrations. The lens's aperture range is f/4.0 to f/22, but with only full-stop adjustments. The film speed range is from ISO 25 to 1600… the G645S obviously arriving before Kodak's T-Max 3200 (P3200) or Ilford Delta 3200, but it's not hard to adjust manually if you really wanted to shoot with these high-speed B&W films (although P3200 is no longer available as new stock).

> SIMPLICITY IS THE NAME OF THE GAME WITH THE GS645S PROFESSIONAL AND IT'S BACK TO BASICS WITH EVERYTHING."

Focusing GS645S is via a double-image rangefinder, and its spot is quite small and so consequently can be hard to see in some situations. The minimum focusing distance is one metre, and lens has depth-of-field markings for f/5.6, f/11, f/16 and f/22. The depth-of-field is pretty wide at the smallest aperture settings so if you are having difficulty with seeing the RF spot you can easily work out what's in focus using the lens markings. For example, if you set the focusing distance to five meters, everything from two metres to infinity will be in focus. The viewfinder is a Reverse Galilean type with a brightline picture frame which provides automatic parallax correction when shooting at the shortest focusing distances.

SIMPLE PLEASURES

Simplicity is the name of the game with the GS645S Professional and it's back to basics with everything, but this makes it very involving to use, with the reward of nice big negatives or transparencies. The lens is nicely sharp, contrasty and well-corrected so the image quality is truly exceptional especially when shooting with the slower, finer-grained films.

Even if you've never used a rollfilm camera before, the loading procedure is very straightforward and, after that, the GS645S works like any mechanical/manual 35mm camera from the same era… with the advantage that you don't have to rewind the film at the end, you just wind off the end paper, open the back and remove the full spool. However, this is always best done in the shade with the exposed spools subsequently stored somewhere dark (back in the original carton is good enough) until you can get them processed.

As with the digital GFX100RF, the main attraction is that it's a medium format camera that's both compact and lightweight so it's easy to carry around even on longer treks. The 35mm-equivalent lens is versatile, but if you're predominantly a landscape shooter then the GS645W Professional with its 28mm-equivalent lens is probably the better choice (although it doesn't have rangefinder-assisted focusing).

It's worth noting that these cameras are now over 40 years old and being largely plastic, things can break which needs to be considered when shopping around for one… particularly check both shutter and rangefinder operation. They were never built in big numbers in the first place but are still reasonably easy to find on the second-hand market with Australian prices typically around $1000-1200 for the GS645S if it's in mint or near-mint condition. The GS645W is a little less common – the wider-angle lens perhaps makes it more of a 'keeper' – but the preloved prices are pretty much the same as those for 'S' model. In either case, go for best possible example that you can afford.

THE VERDICT

The Fujica/Fuji GS series 6x4.5cm fixed-lens cameras now represent one of the most affordable routes into medium format film photography. They're certainly more capable than any of the 'toy' cameras such as a Holga and both more compact and easier to use than the affordable TLRs such as the Yashica Mat models. Additionally, the 6x4.5cm frame size delivers a good combination of image quality and economy so it only depends on whether you're happy to go down the fixed-lens route. The main alternatives with interchangeable lenses are Mamiya's 6x4.5cm SLRs – of which there are many models and generations supported by comparatively extensive lens systems – or Bronica's ETR models. It must be said, that the higher volumes made of both these lines over their various generations means the secondhand prices are quite attractive. Also from Bronica is the much rarer RF645 interchangeable lens rangefinder model. This is a highly desirable camera given its compact size and feature set, but there are only a handful of lenses available and secondhand prices are in the region of $3000+ with the Zenzanon RF65mm f/4.0 standard lens. In comparison then, the Fuji GS645S Professional looks like excellent value for money.

australian

hi-fi

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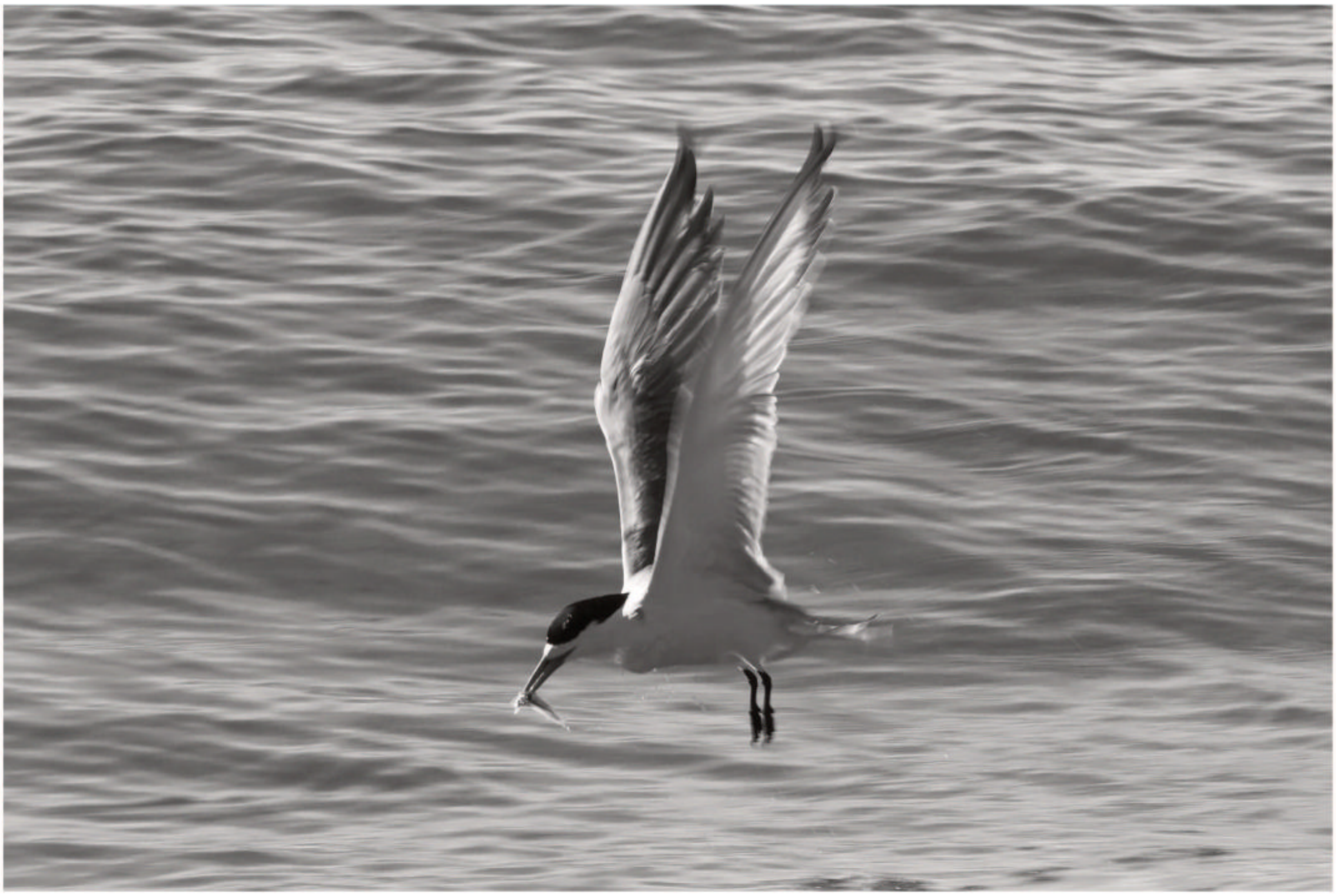


HIGHLY COMMENDED

The nature theme continues in this round with a great bird study – unusually in B&W – shot by **Suhas Sudhakar Kulkarni**. It's appropriately called *The Catch* and Suhas panned at 1/160 second to introduce some motion blur in the background and give more of an impression of the bird's speed. The camera was a Canon EOS R10 fitted with a Canon RF 100-400mm f/5.6-8.0 IS USM telezoom.

2025 SIGMA SHOWCASE – OPEN FOR ENTRIES

Sigma lenses is the sponsor for our Showcase competition, made possible through the generosity of the Australian distributor C.R. Kennedy & Company Pty Ltd. The grand prize for the 2025 Sigma Showcase is a Sigma lens to the value of $1000 and the winner can pick the model and the mount that they want. Additionally, the winner of each round receives a complimentary six-issue subscription to *Australian Camera* magazine. If you already subscribe, your prize subscription will commence upon the expiry of your paid one. You can enter the Sigma Showcase as many times as you like during the year, submitting up to four photographs each time. The entries received after the 2025 competition's new closing date of 31 December 2025 will be automatically entered in the 2026 Sigma Showcase which kicks off on 1 January 2026. Note that it is not a requirement that entries to the Sigma Showcase be taken with a Sigma camera or lens. Read the accompanying rules carefully and get snapping.

Tell us how you did it! When you enter the Sigma Showcase, remember to explain any tips and techniques you used to achieve the result. Also, let us know the type of camera and lens. Enter by email (see next page).

1. Title ______________________ Camera ______________ Lens ____________________

2. Title ______________________ Camera ______________ Lens ____________________

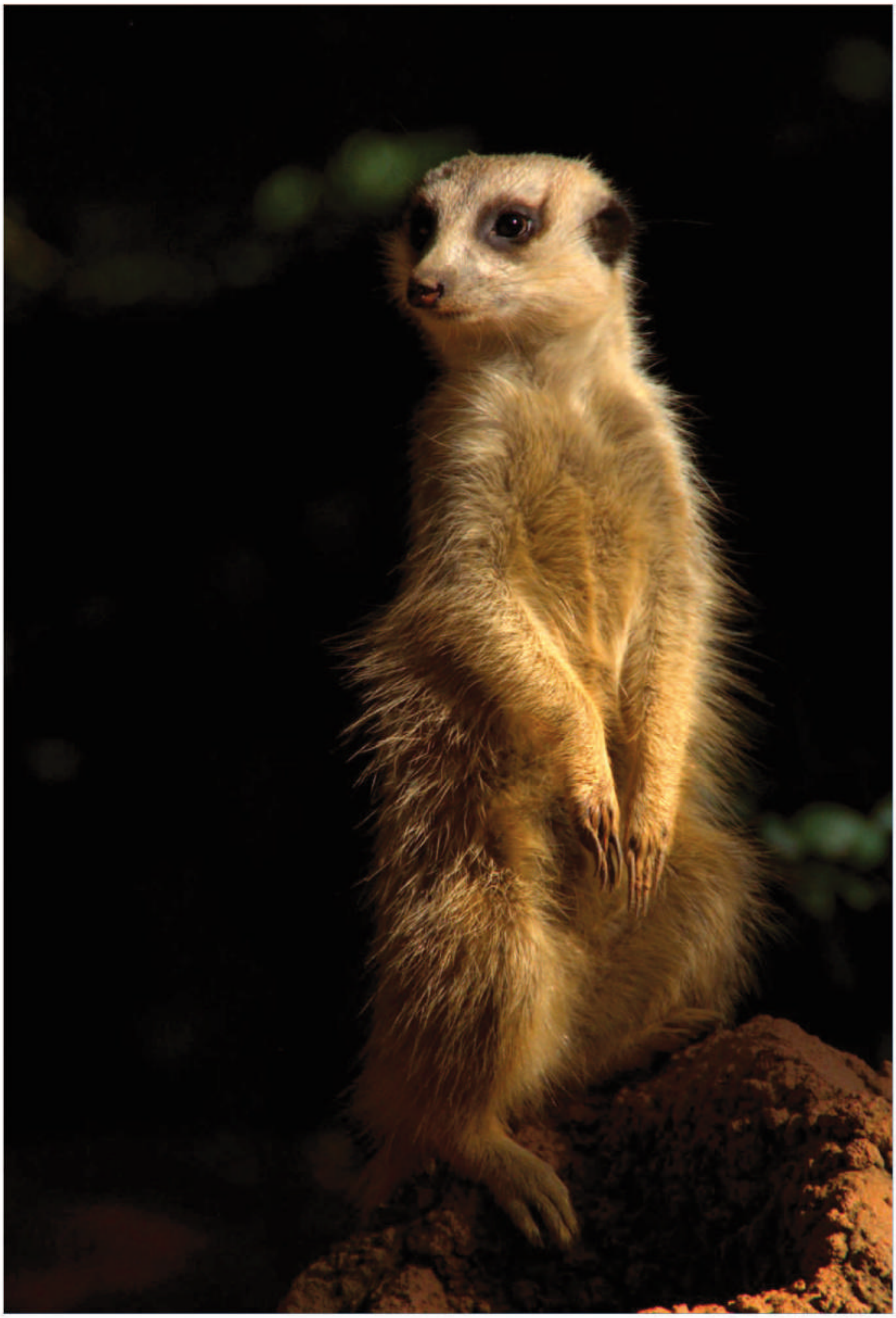
3. Title ______________________ Camera ______________ Lens ____________________

4. Title ______________________ Camera ______________ Lens ____________________

Name ____ Telephone ____________________

Address ______________________________________ State __________ Postcode __________

Email to: camera@futurenet.com



2025 SIGMA SHOWCASE FOURTH ROUND WINNERS

WINNER

They say never work with children or animals, but meerkats can be quite co-operative subjects as they hold their classic look-out pose. This one was photographed at Perth Zoo by **Bruce Finkelstein** and the direct lighting with deep shadow behind really adds some dynamics to the portrait. Bruce used a Pentax K-5 fitted with a Pentax DA 18-250mm f/3.5-6.3 ED zoom.

ENTRY GUIDELINES

You can enter the Sigma Showcase by emailing your entries as attachments to camera@futurenet.com. Please note that we are no longer accepting physical entries.

The requirements for submitting digital files are as follows.

300 dpi resolution, and at a file size which enables a reproduction of up to 20x15 cm. Please avoid submitting overly large file sizes, especially when emailing the images. Up to 2.0 MB in file size is more than sufficient.

- Digital retouching and manipulation is permitted, but the judges will continue to reward good in-camera techniques.
- Full details of the camera, lens and any retouching must be supplied with the image. Images can be titled if you wish, but this isn't essential.
- Up to four images may be permitted per entry.

What We Need To Know: We'd like to know a bit about your entries, so supplying the details below will help the judges better assess your images. Please feel free to add any other information that you feel is important.

- Title (optional)
- Camera
- Lens
- Exposure - shutter speed, aperture and ISO
- Location and/or situation
- Post camera processing (if any)
- Additional Comments
- Your mailing address

DIGITAL SLR CAMERAS BUYER’S CHECK LIST

THIS CHECKLIST is designed to allow direct comparisons between different camera models, listed here in price order within each brand. The published prices are mostly supplied by the distributors as recommended retail prices (RRPs). However, some distributors no longer supply RRPs to the media, so it has become necessary to determine an ‘estimated street price’ derived from the range of prices for a model published by retailers. Where this has been necessary, the letter ‘E’ appears at the start of the entry.

A dot appearing in a column indicates that the feature is available on the camera model listed. Where a specification or product detail hasn’t yet been published or confirmed, the letters TBA (to be announced) or TBC (to be confirmed) are used. If a feature is irrelevant to a particular model – such as mirror lock-up for compact system cameras – then n/a (not applicable) is used. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy; please send any corrections to **camera@futurenet.com.**

			Sensor Size			Sensor Type			File Formats			Memory Cards							Exposure Modes						Features										
Model	**Price (Body Only Unless Noted With Asterisk *)**	**Megapixels (Effective)**	**Full-Frame**	**APS/DX**	**Four-Thirds**	**CCD**	**CMOS**	**Foveon**	**RAW**	**TIFF**	**JPEG**	**CF/XQD/Cfast**	**Memory Stick**	**SD/SDHC/SDXC**	**Continuous Shooting Speed (fps)**	**Buffer Length (U=Unlimited) Max. Resolution**	**Autofocus Points**	**Metering Pixels/Zones**	**Program**	**Subject Programs**	**Aperture Priority**	**Shutter Priority**	**Manual**	**Shutter Speeds**	**Built-In Flash**	**Anti-Dust**	**FHD Video**	**4K Video**	**Anti-Shake In Body**	**Wi-Fi**	**Live View**	**Weather Proofing**	**Monitor Size (cm)**	**Weight (Body Only)**	**Review Issue**
Canon EOS 3000D*	$699	18		•			•		•		•			•	3	110	9	63	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000	•		•			•	•		6.8	436	Jul/Aug ‘18
Canon EOS 1500D*	$849	24.1		•			•		•		•			•	3	150	9	63	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000	•		•			•	•		7.62	475	Jul/Aug ‘18
Canon EOS 90D	$2,099	32.5		•			•		•		•			•	10	58	45	220K	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/16,000	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	7.7	701	Nov/Dec ‘19
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV	$3,699	30.4	•				•		•		•	•		•	7	U	61	150K	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•		•	•	•	8.1	890	Jan/Feb ‘17
Nikon D7500	$1,599	20.9		•			•		•		•			•	8	100	51	180K	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/8000	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	8.1	640	
Nikon D780	$3,599	24.5	•				•		•		•			•	7	100	51	180k	•		•	•	•	900-1/8000		•	•	•		•	•	•	8.1	755	Jul/Aug ‘20
Nikon D850	$4,549	45.7	•				•		•	•	•	•		•	7	200	153	180K	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•		•	•	•	8.1	915	Nov/Dec ‘17
Nikon D6	$10,699	20.8	•				•		•		•	•			14	200	105	180K	•		•	•		900-1/8000		•	•	•		•	•	•	8.1	1270	Nov/Dec ‘20
Pentax KF	$1,299	24.24		•			•		•		•			•	6	40	11	77	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/6000	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	7.62	625	
Pentax K-3 Mark III	$2,995	25.73		•			•		•		•			•	12	37	101	370K	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	735	Issue 423
Pentax K-1 Mark II Limited	$4,099	36.4	•				•		•		•			•	4.4	70	33	86K	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•		•	•	•	•	8.1	925	
DIGITAL RANGEFINDER CAMERAS																																			
Leica M11	$15,090	60.3	•				•		•		•			•	4.5	100	MF/RF	TBC			•		•	60-1/16,000						•	•		7.5	455	Mar/Apr ‘22
Leica M11-P	$15,490	60.3	•				•		•		•			•	4.5	100	MF/RF	TBC			•		•	60-1/16,000						•	•		7.5	455	Issue 425
Leica M11-D	$15,990	60.3	•				•		•		•			•	4.5	100	MF/RF	TBC			•		•	60-1/16,000						•				457	
Leica M11 Monochrom	$16,290	60.3	•				•		•		•			•	4.5	100	MF/RF	TBC			•		•	60-1/16,000						•	•		7.5	461	
MIRRORLESS CAMERAS																																			
Canon EOS R100*	$1,049	24.1		•			•		•		•			•	6.5	97	3975	384	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000	•		•	•		•	•		7.5	309	
Canon EOS R50*	$1,399	24.2		•			•		•		•			•	15	28	4503	384	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/8000	•		•	•		•	•		7.5	328	Issue 423
Canon EOS R50 V*	$1,449	24.2		•			•		•		•			•	15	28	4503	384	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/8000			•	•		•			7.5	323	
Canon EOS R10*	$1,729	24.2		•			•		•		•			•	23	123	4503	384	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000	•	•	•	•		•	•		7.62	429	Issue 419
Canon EOS RP	$1,819	26	•				•		•		•			•	5	U	4779	384	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000		•	•	•		•	•	•	7.62	440	May/June ‘19
Canon EOS R7	$2,469	32.5		•			•		•		•			•	30	184	5915	384	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	612	Jul/Aug ‘22
Canon EOS R8	$2,599	24.2	•				•		•		•			•	40	1000+	4897	384	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/16,000		•	•	•		•	•	•	7.5	414	Issue 423
Canon EOS R6 Mark II	$4,199	24.2	•				•		•		•			•	40	190	4897	384	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/16,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	588	Issue 421
Canon EOS R5	$5,499	45	•				•		•		•	•		•	20	350	5940	384	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	650	Sept/Oct ‘20
Canon EOS R5 Mark II	$6,699	45	•				•		•		•	•		•	30	760	5850	6144	•		•	•		30-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	588	Issue 428
Canon EOS R3	$8,199	24.1	•				•		•		•	•		•	30	540	4779	384	•		•	•	•	30-1/64,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	915	Jan/Feb ‘22
Canon EOS R1	$10,990	24.2	•				•		•		•	•			40	500	4368	6144	•		•	•	•	30-1/64,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	920	
Fujifilm X-T30 II	$1,449	26.1		•			•		•		•			•	20	32	425	256	•		•	•	•	900-1/32,000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		7.62	329	Jan/Feb ‘22
Fujifilm X-M5	$1,449	26.1		•			•		•		•			•	20	127	425	256	•		•	•	•	900-1/32,000		•	•	•		•			7.62	307	Issue 430
Fujifilm X-S20	$2,349	26.1		•			•		•		•			•	20	256	425	256	•		•	•	•	900-1/32,000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		7.62	410	Issue 424
Fujifilm X-T50	$2,599	40.2		•			•		•		•			•	20	168	425	256	•		•	•	•	900-1/180,000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		7.62	389	Issue 428
Fujifilm X-E5	$2,699	40.2		•			•		•	•	•			•	20	168	425	256	•		•	•	•	900-1/180,000		•	•	•	•	•	•		7.62	396	Issue 433
Fujifilm X-T5	$2,899	40.2		•			•		•	•	•			•	15	119	425	256	•		•	•	•	900-1/180,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	476	Issue 422
Fujifilm X-H2	$3,399	40.2		•			•		•	•	•	•		•	13	1000+	425	256	•		•	•	•	900-1/180,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	579	Issue 420
Fujifilm X-H2S	$3,999	26.1		•			•		•	•	•	•		•	40	1000+	425	256	•		•	•	•	900-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	579	Jul/Aug ‘22
Leica SL3-S	$8,990	24.6	•				•		•		•	•		•	30	175	779	TBC	•		•	•	•	1800-1/16,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	768	Issue 433
Leica SL3	$11,890	60.3	•				•		•		•	•		•	15	70	315	TBC	•		•	•	•	3600-1/16,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	769	Issue 429
Nikon Z30*	$1,549	20.9		•			•		•		•			•	11	71	209	TBC	•		•	•	•	30-1/4000	•		•	•		•			7.5	350	
Nikon Z50*	$1,469	20.9		•			•		•		•			•	11	71	209	TBC	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000	•		•	•		•	•		8.1	395	

IT'S TIME FOR
FILM

ILFOCOLOR VT400 PLUS
ILFOCOLOR VT400 PLUS
ILFOCOLOR VT400 PLUS
PALMER & Co
034
036
PENTAX 17
HD PENTAX LENS HF 1:3.5 25mm Traditional
ø40.5
0.25 0.5 1.2 1.7 3 ∞ m
0.82 1.7 4 5.6 10 ∞ ft

Introducing the first film camera released by PENTAX in over 20 years.

The PENTAX 17 is a unique half-frame film camera that captures two 17mm x 24mm images on a single 35mm frame. With vertical-format photos, it offers a smartphone-like aspect ratio but with the timeless charm of film. Featuring manual controls like zone focus, film winding, and customisable dials for exposure and ISO, the PENTAX 17 gives you full creative control. Perfect for both seasoned film enthusiasts and newcomers, it delivers a nostalgic, hands-on photography experience in a modern package.

PENTAX 17

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MIRRORLESS CAMERAS BUYER'S CHECK LIST

CameraHouse

			Sensor Size			Sensor Type		File Formats			Memory Cards							Exposure Modes						Features										
Model * single lens kit ** twin lens kit	Price (Body Only Unless Noted With Asterisk*)	Megapixels (Effective)	Full-Frame	APS/DX	Four Thirds	CMOS	Foveon	RAW	TIFF	JPEG	Compact Flash	Memory Stick	SD/SDHC/SDXC * = microSD	Continuous Shooting Speed (fps)	Buffer Length (U=Unlimited) Max. Resolution	Autofocus Points	Metering Zones	Program	Subject Programs	Aperture Priority	Shutter Priority	Manual	Shutter Speeds	Built-In Flash	Anti-Dust	FHD Video	4K Video	Anti-Shake In Body	Wi-Fi	Built-In Viewfinder	Weather Proofing	Monitor Size (cm)	Weight (Body Only)	Review Issue
Nikon Zfc*	$1,799	20.9		•		•		•		•			•	11	71	209	TBC	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000	•		•	•		•	•		7.5	390	Nov/Dec '21
Nikon Z50II*	$2,279	20.9		•		•		•		•			•	30	200	231	TBC	•	•	•	•	•	900-1/4000	•		•	•		•	•		8.1	495	
Nikon Z5	$2,399	24.3	•			•		•		•			•	4.5	100	273	TBC	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	590	Jan/Feb '21
Nikon Z5II	$2,699	24.5	•			•		•		•			•	30	120	299	TBC	•		•	•	•	900-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	620	Issue 431
Nikon Z6II	$3,699	24.5	•			•		•	•	•	•		•	14	200	273	TBC	•		•	•	•	900-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	615	May/June '21
Nikon Zf	$3,499	24.5	•			•		•	•	•			•	30	120	273	TBC	•		•	•	•	900-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	630	Issue 425
Nikon Z6III	$4,199	24.5	•			•		•		•	•		•	60	1000+	299	TBC	•		•	•	•	900-1/16,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	660	Issue 429
Nikon Z7II	$5,549	45.7	•			•		•	•	•	•		•	10	200	493	TBC	•		•	•	•	900-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	615	
Nikon Z8	$7,449	45.7	•			•		•	•	•	•		•	20	1000+	493	TBC	•		•	•	•	900-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	820	Issue 424
Nikon Z9	$9,899	45.7	•			•		•	•	•	•			30	1000+	493	TBC	•		•	•	•	900-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	1160	Jan/Feb '22
Olympus OM-D E-M10 IV	$949	20.3			•	•		•		•			•	15	49	121	324	•	•	•	•	•	60-1/16,000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		7.62	335	Nov/Dec '20
OM System OM-5	$1,499	20.4			•	•		•		•			•	30	20	121	324	•		•	•	•	60-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	366	Issue 421
OM System OM-5 Mark II	$1,699	20.4			•	•		•		•			•	30	TBC	121	324	•		•	•	•	60-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	370	Issue 433
OM System OM-1	$2,699	20.4			•	•		•		•			•	120	92	1053	324	•		•	•	•	60-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	511	Mar/Apr '22
OM System OM-3	$3,199	20.4			•	•		•		•			•	120	90	1053	324	•		•	•	•	60/1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	413	Issue 430
OM System OM-1 Mark II	$3,599	20.4			•	•		•		•			•	120	219	1053	324	•		•	•	•	60-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	511	Issue 427
Panasonic Lumix G100V*	$1,299	20.3			•	•		•		•			•	10	480	49	1728	•	•	•	•	•	60-1/16,000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		7.62	303	
Panasonic Lumix G85*	$1,449	16			•	•		•		•			•	9	100	49	1728	•	•	•	•	•	60-1/16,000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	453	Jan/Feb '17
Panasonic Lumix G95	$1,599	20.3			•	•		•		•			•	9	300	49	1728	•	•	•	•	•	60-1/16,000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	484	Nov/Dec '19
Panasonic Lumix G9	$1,599	20.3			•	•		•		•			•	20	600	225	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	579	Jan/Feb '18
Panasonic Lumix G90*	$1,699	20.3			•	•		•		•			•	9	300	49	1728	•	•	•	•	•	60-1/16,000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	481	
Panasonic Lumix GH5 II	$2,099	20.3			•	•		•		•			•	12	999	225	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/16,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	647	Sept/Oct '21
Panasonic Lumix S9	$2,699	24.2	•			•		•		•			•	30	36	779	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•			7.62	403	
Panasonic Lumix S5	$2,799	24.2	•			•		•		•			•	7	999	225	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	630	Jan/Feb '21
Panasonic Lumix S5II	$3,199	24.2	•			•		•		•			•	30	300+	779	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	657	Issue 422
Panasonic Lumix G9 II	$3,299	25.2			•	•		•		•			•	75	225	779	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	575	Issue 427
Panasonic Lumix S5IIX	$3,499	24.2	•			•		•		•			•	30	300+	779	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	657	
Panasonic Lumix S1	$3,599	24.2	•			•		•		•	•		•	9	999	225	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	899	
Panasonic Lumix GH6	$3,699	25.5			•	•		•		•	•		•	75	200	315	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	739	Issue 419
Panasonic Lumix GH7	$3,899	25.2			•	•		•		•	•		•	75	260	315	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	721	
Panasonic Lumix S1 IIE	$4,199	24.1	•			•		•		•	•		•	30	300	779	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	712	
Panasonic Lumix S1 II	$5,299	24.1	•			•		•		•	•		•	70	300	779	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/16,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.62	718	
Panasonic Lumix S1R	$5,299	47.3	•			•		•		•	•		•	9	50	225	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	898	Sept/Oct '19
Panasonic Lumix S1R II	$5,499	44.3	•			•		•		•	•		•	40	80	779	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/16,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	712	Issue 432
Panasonic Lumix S1H	$5,999	24.2	•			•		•		•			•	9	999	225	1728	•		•	•	•	60-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	1052	Mar/Apr '20
Sigma BF	$3,995	24.2	•			•		•		•				8	1000	49	TBC	•		•	•	•	30-/25,600		•	•	•				•	8.1	388	Issue 431
Sigma fp L	$3,899	61.2	•			•		•		•			•	10	14	49	TBC	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8.1	375	
Sony Alpha ZV-E10	$849	24.2		•		•		•		•		•	•	11	99	425	1200	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000		•	•	•		•			7.5	343	
Sony Alpha 6400	$1,249	24.2		•		•		•		•		•	•	11	115	425	1200	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/4000	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	403	Sept/Oct '19
Sony Alpha ZV-E10 II	$1,549	26		•		•		•		•			•	11	1000+	759	1200	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•			7.5	292	
Sony Alpha 6700	$2,199	26		•		•		•		•			•	11	143	759	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	409	
Sony Alpha 7 III	$1,999	24.2	•			•		•		•		•	•	10	163	693	1200	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	650	Sept/Oct '18
Sony Alpha ZV-E1	$2,699	12.1	•			•		•		•			•	10	1000+	759	1200	•	•	•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•		•	7.5	400	
Sony Alpha 7C II	$2,699	33	•			•		•		•			•	10	88	759	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	429	
Sony Alpha 7 IV	$3,099	33	•			•		•		•	•		•	10	1000+	759	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	658	
Sony Alpha 7CR	$3,999	61	•			•		•		•			•	8	48	693	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	430	
Sony Alpha 7R IV	$3,799	61	•			•		•		•		•	•	10	68	567	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	665	Jan/Feb '20
Sony Alpha 7S III	$3,999	12.1	•			•		•		•	•		•	10	1000+	759	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	699	Mar/Apr '21
Sony Alpha 7R V	$4,699	61	•			•		•		•	•		•	10	1000+	693	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8	638	
Sony Alpha 9 II	$5,790	24.2	•			•		•		•		•	•	20	361	693	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	678	May/June '20
Sony Alpha 1	$6,999	50.1	•			•		•		•	•		•	30	165	759	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/8000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	7.5	725	
Sony Alpha 9 III	$8,999	24.6	•			•		•		•	•		•	120	192	759	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/80,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8	617	
Sony Alpha 1 II	$9,999	50.1	•			•		•		•	•		•	30	400	759	1200	•		•	•	•	30-1/32,000		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8	658	

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